DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 465 426 PS 030 290

AUTHOR	Greenman, Jim
TITLE	What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times. Facilitator's Guide [and Student's Guide].
INSTITUTION	Bright Horizons Family Solutions, Inc., Watertown, MA.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	153p.; Bright Horizons Family Solutions formed a partnership with JPMorgan Chase, Mercy Coprs, and the Dougy Center to provide support and resources to children and families impacted by the September 11 attacks. The student's guide contains light print and may not reproduce adequately.
AVAILABLE FROM	Gryphon House, Inc., P.O. Box 207, Beltsville, MD 20704 (Facilitator's guide, $4; Student's guide, $4). Tel: 800-638-0928 (Toll Free); Tel: 301-595-9500; Fax: 301-595-0051; Web site: http://www.ghbooks.com. For full text: http://www.brighthorizons.com/talktochildren.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Learner (051) -- Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Adult Child Relationship; Age Differences; Anger; Anxiety; Caregiver Child Relationship; Childhood Needs; *Children; *Coping; *Emotional Adjustment; *Family Programs; Fear; Individual Differences; Leaders Guides; Parent Child Relationship; Terrorism
IDENTIFIERS	September 11th Attacks; Terrorism Survivors; Tolerance

ABSTRACT

In response to the September 11th, 2001 terrorists attacks, "Comfort for Kids" was formed as a collaborative effort to provide support and resources to children and families directly affected. This facilitator's guide and student's guide represent one part of the three-pronged approach of the "Comfort for Kids" program. The facilitator's guide contains guidelines for facilitating sessions to help parents, professionals, and volunteers working with children develop strategies for supporting children in a crisis. The session provides an opportunity to bring adults together in an open forum, where they can share insights, comments, and questions about the reactions and behavior they are witnessing in the children for whom they care. The guide is a comprehensive package for a 60- to 90-minute session and contains checklists of necessary materials and equipment, presentation scripts and key points to cover, optional approaches to the session, facilitation tips and techniques, a sample of potential questions from workshop participants, key points at a glance, and reproducible overheads and handouts. Topics for the workshop discussion include children's reactions to traumatic events, language for responding to children's reactions and questions, ways to promote tolerance and respect for diversity, and resources for future use. The student's guide addresses the fear, anxiety, anger, and issues of tolerance that children may face in the wake of the September 11th attacks and the enduring military effort. It also records adults' reactions to trauma, the timing and intensity of feelings, and the behavior changes that follow. Focusing on the importance of identifying one's own reactions and finding ways to care for oneself in order to care for children are also covered. The student's guide concludes with a list of Web sites and print

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

resources related to children and stress, international issues and relief, war and terrorism, and respect for diversity. (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 465 426

What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times. Facilitator's Guide [and Student's Guide].

Jim Greenman

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

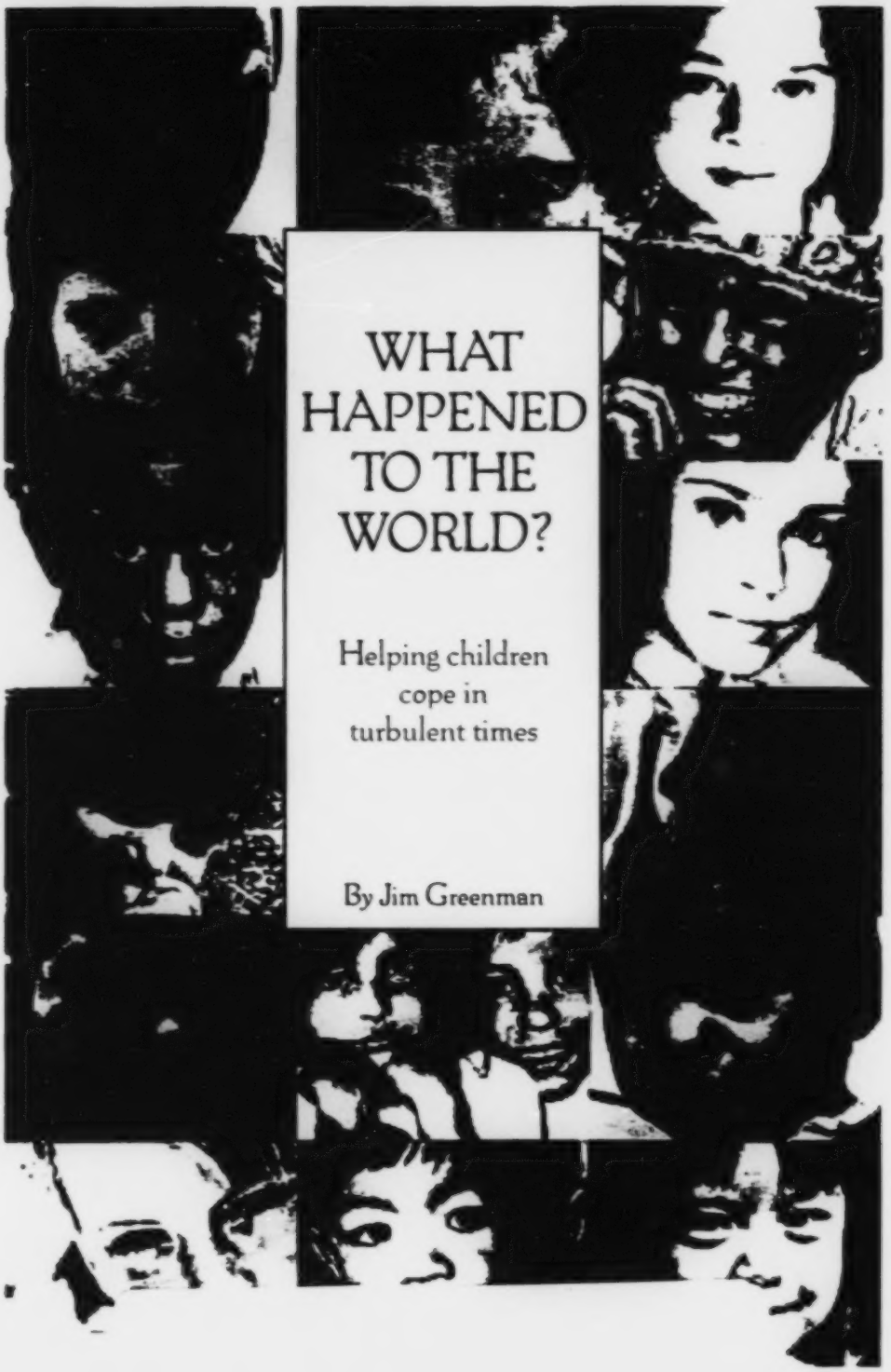
J. Greenman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

PS 030 290

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD?

Helping children cope in turbulent times

By Jim Greenman

PS 030290

Acknowledgements

Grateful appreciation to the following, who contributed advice and assistance:

Nicolas Aste

Susan Brenner

Mary Bresadola

Joy Bunson

Lyle Burrup

Joan Cesaretti

Diana Crespo

Jessica Fein

Heather Ferillo

Alison Hart

Ilene Hoffer

Ilene Hoffer

Griffen Jack

Deborah Koshanksy

Rick Levy

Linda Mason

Donna Schuurman

Tolanda Tolbert

Judy Uhron

Lori Verille

Bruce Wachtler

Jim White

Grateful appreciation to the following, who donated services:

Liquid Fire

Child Care Information Exchange

Grey Ink

Banta Direct Marketing Group

Introduction

In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and their ongoing aftermath, adults and children all over the United States have found their sense of security threatened and their most deeply held beliefs about war, tolerance, and human kindness questioned. *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times* was developed as a resource for parents, teachers, and anyone working with children. The goal of the book is to help adults peer into the minds of children and understand their fears, their grief, and their struggles to understand why the ground under their feet can suddenly shake or a microscopic amount of white powder can inspire terror.

The *What Happened to the World? Facilitator's Guide* is based on content in *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times*. It will assist you in facilitating sessions to help parents, professionals, and volunteers working with children develop strategies for supporting children in a crisis. The session is an opportunity to bring adults together in an open forum, where they can share insights, comments, and questions about the reactions and behaviors they are witnessing in the children for whom they care.

The *Facilitator's Guide* has a comprehensive, user-friendly format that includes everything you will need to facilitate the session, from facilitation tips and overheads to an easy-to-use, step-by-step outline for the session. The guide includes a handout section that can be reproduced and distributed to participants for the session. Also included are a number of sample questions, taken from actual sessions, with sample responses.

The *Facilitator's Guide* accommodates a broad range of facilitation experience. It is a tool for facilitators with a background in training and facilitation and those who have minimal experience with facilitating larger group discussions. The guide provides you with options for various facilitation styles, using overheads or flipcharts or more participatory styles that guide discussion toward several key points. The guide allows for varying the length of the session, depending upon the size of the group, time constraints, and the needs of the participants.

It's never easy to be a parent, teacher, or one who works with children. The task of supporting children and families is made even more challenging during times of crisis and uncertainty. While *What Happened to the World?* is a response to the events of September 11, 2001 and their continuing aftermath, almost all of the insights apply to other calamities, personal and societal. Bringing people together to talk about supporting our children in troubling times has real value. The *What Happened to the World? Facilitator's Guide* is designed to help you facilitate those important discussions.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS i

INTRODUCTION ii

INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL

Getting Started v

About This Guide v

The Session in Perspective ix

Session Preparation x

Session at a Glance xiv

SEGMENTS

Welcome and Introductions 1

Welcome and Introductions 2

Helping Children Cope 6

Helping Children Cope 7

Open Forum 23

Open Forum 24

Closing 26

Closing 27

Optional Post-Session Dialogue 29

Optional Post-Session Dialogue 30

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Tips for Facilitating Discussions 31

A Question and Response Guide for Facilitators 35

Key Points at a Glance 47

Pre-made Flipcharts or Overheads 54

Handouts 58

Getting Started

About This Guide

What is the purpose of this guide?

This facilitator's guide is designed to help you prepare for and facilitate a discussion with parents and/or people who work with children about helping children cope in times of crisis or trouble. The session is based on the material in the *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times* book.

What will I find in the guide?

This facilitator's guide is a comprehensive package that contains:

- checklists of necessary materials and equipment;
- presentation scripts and key points to cover;
- optional approaches to the session;
- facilitation tips and techniques;
- a sampling of potential questions;
- key points at a glance;
- reproducible overheads and handouts.

About This Guide

How is this guide organized?

This guide includes everything you need to facilitate a 60- to 90-minute session: step-by-step instructions, facilitation tips, a listing of sample questions, and overheads and handouts.

This section, "Getting Started," contains all of the preparation information for the *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times* session, such as session objectives, pre-work, required materials, room set-up, and facilitation preparation.

Following this section is the "Session at a Glance" table. This table can serve as your overview reference, showing the segment names, suggested timings, and process descriptions for the entire session.

The session itself is divided into *segments*, each of which is comprised of one or more *content areas*. Each segment begins with a one-page summary showing the Purpose, Time, Process, and Materials for the segment. Use these summary pages to get an overview of the segment that follows.

Following the session outline you will find "Tips for Facilitating Discussions" and "A Question and Response Guide for Facilitators." You will also find the "Key Points at a Glance" table for easy reference during the session. Finally, this guide provides reproducible handouts and overheads.

About This Guide, continued

How is the text laid out in this guide?

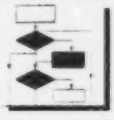
Every action in the session outline is described by a text block like this one, with a margin icon, a title line, and the actual text. The icons are designed to help catch your eye and draw quick attention to "what to do and how to do it." For example, the icon to the left indicates that you, the facilitator, say something next. The title line gives a brief description of what to do, and is followed by the actual script, instruction set, key points, etc. that are needed to complete the action.

A complete list of the margin icons is provided on the following page.

FACILITATOR NOTE

You may also occasionally find facilitator notes such as this one in the text of the session outline. These shaded boxes provide particularly important information in an attention-getting format.

About This Guide, continued

Graphic Icons				
				
Segment Purpose	Overhead	Book or Handouts	Segment Process	Welcome
Time	Transition	Flipchart	Question & Response	Key Points
Materials Required	To Say			

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Session in Perspective

Why a *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times* session?

The session is intended to give parents and caregivers the understanding and tools to help children cope with the aftermath of a crisis, such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The purpose is to provide a forum where parents and caregivers feel comfortable enough to share thoughts, feelings, and insights and ask sensitive questions. Every session will be different, because it will be shaped by the interests and needs of the participants.

Session Objectives

After completing the session, participants will have:

- Participated in a discussion on children's reactions during turbulent times
- Learned ideas and language for responding to children's reactions and questions
- Had an opportunity to ask questions and share stories
- Discussed the need to promote tolerance and respect for diversity
- Identified resource materials for future use

Session Timing

The session is designed to feature 30 minutes of facilitator-led discussion and 30 to 60 minutes of an open forum, which, depending on the number of participant questions, could go longer. A post-session time for individual discussion may be desirable with one or more support facilitators. Throughout the outline you'll be provided suggestions for variations on facilitation and timing.

Number of Participants

The session is appropriate for groups of any size, limited only by space and the ability to respond to participant questions. Larger groups may require a change from a discussion format to a question and response format.

Session Preparation

Pre-Work

No pre-work is required for participants.

Materials

- Participant materials:
  - Copies for each participant of the *What Happened to the World?* book

    or

  - Copies for each participant of the handouts, reproducible from the masters included in this guide
- Pre-made flipcharts or overheads with projector (optional)
- New flipchart paper and markers (optional)
- Other resource materials as available
- Refreshments (optional)

Room Set-Up

Create a relaxed tone for the session by offering refreshments such as coffee, juice, and cookies. Chairs and/or tables should be arranged in rows or a U-shape format facing the facilitator and flipchart or screen if an overhead projector is being used.

Session Preparation

Facilitator Preparation

The facilitator should read and be thoroughly knowledgeable about the *What Happened to the World?* book and other resources being distributed. You should visit a few of the Web sites listed as resources to comment on during the session.

The facilitator should also read and be thoroughly knowledgeable about this guide. This guide offers various facilitation options for each content area – typically the first option will be a presentation style and the second will be a participatory style. You should determine which style best suits your experience and the participants' needs. You will then need to insert personal stories that will expand upon key points.

The facilitator should then prepare the flipcharts or overheads in advance. Flipcharts or overheads are not required but are very useful to systematically provide key information. You may wish to focus more or less time presenting on the different content areas and make the important points during the forum.

We have also included two pre-made flipcharts or overheads that offer strategies for the classroom and can be used if your group is composed primarily of teachers and caregivers.

The facilitator should arrive at the session early in order to set up refreshments, if offered, and check the logistics for the room set-up, such as the location of the restrooms.

Session Preparation

Facilitator Options

The following step-by-step guide has been designed for facilitators with varying levels of experience leading groups and familiarity with the content. Review all of the options and determine which facilitation style best matches your experience with facilitation and your knowledge of the content presented.

For session facilitators who have little to no experience facilitating, we recommend that you follow the guide exactly as designed without using any of the "Facilitation Options." This will allow you to get comfortable with the content and flow of the session, and allow for smooth transitions from segment to segment. Using all of the pre-made flipcharts or overheads will make your session somewhat formal; however, this will enable you to cover all of the content suggested. In order to keep you on the recommended timeframes, ask participants to hold their questions until the "Open Forum" segment. Inform them that you will have plenty of time to answer their questions and share stories. Again, this will make the session somewhat formal, but will help you feel comfortable that you can manage the content and flow of the session. After you facilitate a few sessions, you will probably move to a combination of pre-made flipcharts and facilitation options.

For session facilitators with some facilitation experience, you may want to use a variation of the pre-made flipcharts or overheads and the suggested "Facilitation Options." This format will allow you to cover the main points for which you may require some content or process support, while using open facilitation style for those content points for which you do not need any prompt. This combination style will set a more relaxed, open environment and will allow you some security on content points, as well as keeping you on track. You may choose to take questions throughout the content segment or hold until the "Open Forum," depending on your comfort level with being able to stay on track to cover the content suggested. Taking questions throughout creates a more informal session; however, if you are concerned with covering all of the content points, you may want to hold questions until the forum.

Session Preparation

For those of you who have extensive experience facilitating sensitive sessions and knowledge of the content, we suggest that you use all of the "Facilitation Options" suggested and not the pre-made flipcharts or overheads. Use the "Key Points at a Glance" table to ensure that you cover the key content points throughout the session. We would also recommend that you take questions throughout the session and allow for the key concerns of the participants to guide the content and session flow. This style of facilitation will provide the most informal and relaxed environment for the session.

All three facilitation options will meet the session objectives of providing a forum to share questions and insights, while offering guidance about children's reactions and resources. The way in which you elect to facilitate your session will depend on your experience with facilitating and knowledge of the content. Regardless of which facilitation style you use, it's important that you manage your time well. Be sure to leave enough time for the "Open Forum," which is the most important part of the session. We believe that the guide provides you with a framework and all of the resources necessary to allow participants a forum to communicate and learn to better meet children's needs.

Session at a Glance

Time	Segment	Description
5 minutes	Welcome and Introductions	The facilitator greets participants as they arrive. The facilitator then introduces him/herself and any supporting facilitators. Next, the facilitator establishes why we are here. Finally, the facilitator uses the pre-made flipcharts or overheads to show the session outline.
25 minutes	Helping Children Cope	The facilitator will facilitate a discussion through brief presentations and dialogue strategies, utilizing pre-made flipcharts or overheads (optional) to clarify children's reactions to the crisis, typical behaviors, strategies for handling children's questions, tolerance, and taking care of yourself. The facilitator will point out children's behaviors that are cause for concern.
25 to 55 minutes	Open Forum	The facilitator will facilitate this discussion by using open-ended questions, silence technique, and open body language to encourage participation.
5 minutes	Closing	The facilitator will review the objectives of the session and convey a sense of hope to participants. The facilitator will once again refer participants to the *What Happened to the World?* book as a resource. Finally, the facilitator will reintroduce any supporting facilitators for any further questions and be available for comments from the participants.

15 to 30 minutes (not figured in session length)	Optional Post-Session Dialogue	After bringing the session to a close, the facilitator will invite participants to stay and address any additional questions or comments to the facilitator, any supporting facilitators, and/or other participants.

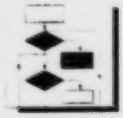
Welcome and Introductions

Purpose

The purpose of this segment is to introduce the facilitator, establish credibility, make a personal connection with the group, introduce any supporting facilitators, and present the session objectives.

Time

5 minutes



Process

The facilitator greets participants as they arrive. The facilitator then introduces him/herself and any supporting facilitators. Next, the facilitator establishes why we are here. Finally, the facilitator uses the pre-made flipcharts or overheads to show the session outline.

Materials Needed

- *What Happened to the World?* book or handouts for each participant
- Pre-made flipcharts/overheads (optional)
- New flipchart paper and markers

Welcome and Introductions

Greet participants as they arrive.

FACILITATOR NOTE

By standing at the door to greet participants as they arrive, you make an immediate connection, which will help relax participants. If you maintain an open posture, smile, and make direct eye contact with participants, it invites good communication. Crossing your arms or standing behind a podium or desk can discourage discussion.

Introduce yourself, establish credibility, and make a connection with the group by providing the information below.

Make the following key points about yourself:

- Give your name.
- Give professional and personal experience.
- Give educational background (if relevant).
- Describe current work as it relates to caring for children or working with families and reactions to the events of September 11, 2001 or the ongoing aftermath.
- Make a personal connection with the group by sharing a story that relates to the "world changing" and what you have witnessed in yourself, your family or friends, or the children and/or families you serve.

Introduce any supporting facilitators.

Welcome and Introductions, continued

Show Overhead 1: Why Are We Here?

To share feelings, questions, and insights to help children cope in turbulent times

To discuss how to respond to children's reactions and questions

To share with you some resources for additional support

FACILITATION OPTIONS

Option 1: Do not use the pre-made flipchart/overhead; instead describe the three points listed above.

Option 2: Ask participants the question, "Why are you here?" and take responses from the group. You might want to write down responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Make sure that the three items outlined above are represented. If anyone in the group has an expectation that will not be met, please acknowledge that their expectation will not be met and move on.

Distribute the *What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times* book or handouts.

Inform participants that the content of the session is based on the information provided in the *What Happened to the World?* book or handouts. We won't be following the book page by page; however, we may reference sections.

Welcome and Introductions, continued

Show Overhead 2: Session Outline

- "Normal" reactions in the aftermath of a crisis
- Strategies for dealing with children's reactions and questions
- Ways to determine when behaviors are cause for concern and may require additional support
- Promoting tolerance and respect for others
- Taking care of yourself
- Open forum for sharing feelings, questions, and insights

Review the session outline.

FACILITATOR NOTE

This session is designed to take most of the questions during the "Open Forum" segment. However, if you prefer to take questions as you go, please let participants know that you will be taking questions throughout the session.

Ask the group the following four questions:

- How many of you are parents, grandparents, or caregivers of children under 3?
- How many of you are parents, grandparents, or caregivers of preschool children?
- How many of you are parents, grandparents, or caregivers of elementary-school-age children?
- How many of you are parents, grandparents, or caregivers of children in junior high or high school?

Welcome and Introductions, continued

FACILITATOR NOTE

Ask the above questions to determine the age groups of interest to the participants in your group. As you present the material that follows, you can give greater time and emphasis to the age groups most represented.

Transition to Helping Children Cope

Tell participants that you are going to begin to talk about some of the reactions that are considered "normal" in the aftermath of crises. What's happening with our kids?

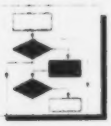
Helping Children Cope

Purpose

The purpose of this segment is to provide parents and caregivers with pertinent information about children's reactions to turbulent times, strategies for helping our children cope, and strategies for helping adults take care of themselves.

Time

25 minutes



Process

The facilitator will facilitate a discussion through brief presentations and dialogue strategies, utilizing pre-made flipcharts or overheads (optional) to clarify children's reactions to the crisis, typical behaviors, strategies for handling children's questions, tolerance, and taking care of yourself. The facilitator will point out children's behaviors that are cause for concern.

Materials Needed

- *What Happened to the World?* book or handouts for each participant
- Pre-made flipcharts/overheads (optional)
- New flipchart paper and markers

Helping Children Cope

Introduce the idea that everyone – adults and children – was shocked and frightened by the terrorist attacks on America and the prospect of a long war on terrorism. Emotional reactions and changes in behavior are common in both children and adults.

As you present the following information, please reference the *What Happened to the World?* book for participants to view complete lists and the handouts for additional information.

Acknowledge that the first step in helping children is to sort through our own reactions and feelings and get the support that we need. Children's sense of safety stems from our strength, our calm, and our reason.

Introduce the common emotional reactions listed below.

Show Overhead 3: Common Emotional Reactions – Adults and Older Children

- Shock
- Consuming interest
- Fear
- Sadness
- Anger
- Guilt
- Helplessness
- Anxiety/worry
- Alienation and isolation

Select four or five reactions from the list and give brief personal examples as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What are some common emotional reactions to a crisis that you have seen?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

Emotional reactions to a crisis lead to some common changes in behavior that participants may be seeing in themselves and others.

Introduce the common behavioral changes listed below.

Show Overhead 4: Common Changes in Behavior – Adults and Older Children

- Increased or decreased appetite
- Altered sleeping patterns
- Fatigue
- Confusion/indecision
- Anxious behavior
- Crying
- Short temper
- Headaches and other minor ailments such as stomachaches

Briefly discuss a few of the behaviors listed above. Add brief personal examples as appropriate.

Note that we will return to the idea of taking care of yourself later in the session.

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What changes in behavior have you seen in the aftermath of September 11 or other crises?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

Direct participants to the *What Happened to the World?* book for a more comprehensive list of emotional reactions and behavioral changes or to the handouts for additional information.

Transition from talking about adults and older children to talking about the reactions of younger children in a crisis.

Every child is different, and there is no right or wrong way for a child to react to a crisis or stress. Normal reactions vary from seeming indifference to continued alarm. We will be discussing some common/normal reactions and behaviors. What is most important is that parents know their own children and look for behavioral changes, and relate the current behavior to behavior prior to the crisis – not all behavior will be reactions to the crisis.

Emphasize that children who are already troubled due to divorce, death of a loved one, or the death of a pet, may see their feelings worsen in times of crisis. These children will need extra attention from the adults around them.

If you are using the *What Happened to the World?* book, reference the sections "Every Child is Different" and "Knowing the Child."

Helping Children Cope, continued

Introduce information about the reactions of children under 3: "They know something is up – all their senses tell them that things are not the same and not quite right."

Make the following key points:

- Children under 3 can only express their reactions through the language of behavior and may:
  - Exhibit altered eating or sleeping patterns
  - Be contrary
  - Cling to a parent
  - Cry more than usual

Introduce information about the reactions of preschool children: "They know more than you think, and much of it is incomplete or misconceived."

Make the following key points:

- Preschool children often fear abandonment. They may want to be powerful and play to act powerfully. They may react by:
  - Playing out current events by portraying heroes, villains, and/or violence. Children use play to try to make sense of the world.
  - Regress to a younger behavior: previously potty-trained children may have accidents or wet the bed
  - Have nightmares, difficulty sleeping and want to sleep with parents
  - Express fears (of the dark, of planes, of you leaving)
  - Become clingy and afraid of being left alone
  - Get into power struggles, become negative
  - Want to help

Helping Children Cope, continued

Introduce information about the reactions of elementary-school-age children: "They know more than you think and want to know more."

Make the following key points:

- Elementary-school-age children may:
  - Express curiosity about the details, including morbid details
  - Become clingy and whiny
  - Show aggressive behavior at home and/or school
  - Show loss of interest and poor concentration in school
  - Develop headaches and/or other physical ailments
  - Seem indifferent because it is too abstract for them

Introduce information about the reactions of children in junior high or high school: "They know more than you think and want to know more, but not always from you, and they may or may not want to share."

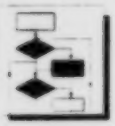
Make the following key points:

- Children in junior high or high school may:
  - Experience appetite and sleep disturbance
  - Show increase or decrease in energy level
  - Show indifference
  - Refuse to be cooperative
  - Experience minor physical aliments
  - Withdraw and become isolated
  - Worry about their future and potential military service

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

After introducing each age group, instead of presenting the above information you might ask participants, "What reactions are you seeing in your children or the children you serve?" Write participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart according to age group.



Please note that you have now covered about half of the content in this segment. You have 25 minutes to present all of the material, so please be aware of your timing.

The "Open Forum" that follows the content segment is the most important objective of the session. Be sure to allow enough time for the "Open Forum." It is recommended that you have a minimum of 25 minutes to address participants' insights, questions, and concerns.

Transition to discussing strategies for helping children cope.

Remind participants that the most important reaction to their children is to listen and answer questions honestly and at the maturity level they can handle. They need consistent reassurance that they, you, and the world will be okay.

Introduce strategies for helping children cope with the emotions that follow a crisis.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Show Overhead 5: Strategies for Helping Children Cope

- Children pick up on our anxiety and fear; therefore, we need to be as strong as we can be and let them know that they are safe through physical and verbal reassurance.
- It doesn't work to try to completely shelter children from information regarding the crisis; be honest and give age-appropriate, factual information. Ask them what they know.
- Listen, listen, listen – when they seek to communicate. Encourage children to ask as many questions as necessary. Children of all ages need to know that we are here for them.
- Minimize children's exposure to television, radio, magazines, and newspapers during news of violence and crisis.
- Keep established routines and rituals, and strengthen bedtime rituals for preschool and school-age children.
- Remember that children use play to make sense of their emotions and may engage in fantasy play that involves heroes, villains, and destruction. Such play is normal and healthy, but do not allow hurting – physically or emotionally.
- Allow children who are "acting out" to release anger in a safe environment.
- Help children get involved with relief efforts.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The content of the actual pre-made flipchart/overhead is a slightly condensed version of the above list. Use the information above to elaborate on these strategies.

Briefly discuss a few of the strategies listed above. Add brief personal examples as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What are some strategies you are using to help children cope?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

If you are using the *What Happened to the World?* book, reference coping strategies, listed by age group. If you are using the handouts, reference "Helping Children Cope with Stress: A Quick Summary."

Transition to talking about ways that parents can find out if their children need help outside of the family.

Make the following key points:

- Symptoms usually disappear as families adjust to a "new normal." Look for serious, continuous changes in behavior not typical of your child.
- Watch for behaviors that are prohibiting children from living their lives, particularly acting out or withdrawal.
- Not sleeping is normal; having nightmares every night or throwing up every night is not.

Introduce some strategies for answering children's questions.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Show Overhead 6: Answering Children's Questions

- Get your own feelings and thoughts straight. Share your feelings, but always be strong and calm. Offer the reassurances you can.
- Think about what you want to say and how you want it to come across.
- Ask children what they think the words that they are using mean (*war, terrorism, Arab, Islam, army*) and what feelings they are having.
- Ask what's on the child's mind and follow his or her lead. Recognize the clues in the child's art, play, and/or conversations.
- Respect the growing ability of older children to understand issues.
- Protect your child's idealism. Stay alert to racism and stereotyping, and work for cross-cultural understanding.
- Be alert for opportunities to steer children toward helping actively.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The content of the actual pre-made flipchart/overhead is a slightly condensed version of the above list. Use the information above to elaborate on these strategies.

Briefly discuss a few of the strategies listed above. Add brief personal examples as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What are some strategies you are using to answer children's questions?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

Refer participants to "Answering Children's Questions" in the *What Happened to the World?* book or the handouts.

Transition to a discussion of the importance of tolerance and respect for others in times when there are clashes in ethnicity, culture, or religion.

FACILITATOR NOTE

As you begin a discussion of tolerance, keep in mind that this is a sensitive topic. Carefully read over the "Tips for Facilitating Discussions" and "A Question and Response Guide for Facilitators" sections that follow for help in managing a discussion on tolerance and respect for diversity. We want to be careful not to preach or judge anyone for his or her beliefs. The goal is to help participants promote tolerance among children. Children need to understand that the world (and the U.S.) is composed of many peoples, cultures, and religions that want peace and oppose terrorism, including nearly all Muslims and people in or from the Middle East.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Children learn prejudice at a very young age from the adult world. Prejudice and intolerance begin with a lack of understanding and fear. Currently, when many people are generalizing from a fear of terrorists to a fear of people of Middle Eastern descent or Muslims, we need to help our children refrain from developing unfounded prejudices.

It's important that we explain to children that we are at war with terrorists – a group of men and the people who support them. We are not at war with a country or with Muslims or Islam. The terrorists are not representative of the Middle East or Muslims. While many in the Middle East (and other parts of the world) disagree with American policies, very few support terrorism.

Introduce a few ways to promote tolerance and respect for others.

Show Overhead 7: Tolerance: Respect for Others

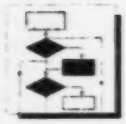
- Model appropriate behavior.
- Don't respond passively to prejudice.
- Discuss issues of bias with older children.
- Help children learn more about people of other cultures, countries, and religious faiths.
- Reach out to people of Middle Eastern heritage and Muslims.

Briefly discuss the ideas above, adding personal examples as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What are some ways to promote tolerance and respect for others?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.



If the group is composed primarily of teachers and caregivers, please see the "Facilitation Option" below. If not, please move ahead to the "Transition to Taking Care of Yourself."

FACILITATION OPTION

If the group is composed primarily of teachers and caregivers, we suggest that you facilitate a discussion about what teachers and caregivers can do to promote tolerance and help children respond to the times in which we live. The next two pre-made flipcharts/overheads offer strategies for promoting tolerance in the classroom.

Introduce some strategies that teachers and caregivers can use to promote tolerance in the classroom.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Show Overhead 8: What Teachers Can Do

- Expand the children's knowledge of the world.
- Provide books at the appropriate level on fear, conflict and respect for others.
- Create a democratic classroom - safe for discussion of conflicting ideas.
- Create opportunities for cooperation: projects, chores, decision-making.
- Help children construct their own solutions to disagreements.
- Create projects based on the children's current interests and concerns.
- Encourage play and art representing feelings and thoughts.
- Research and celebrate differences in identity, culture, and beliefs.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The content of the actual pre-made flipchart/overhead is a slightly condensed version of the above list. Use the information above to elaborate on these strategies.

Briefly discuss a few of the strategies above, using personal examples as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Show Overhead 9: What Teachers Can Do

- Notice unfairness and injustice in daily life and in the news.
- Find the hope and goodness in every dark moment: the caring, helping, courage, tolerance, and compassion.
- Help children take action, and take action with them: Write letters, send pictures, raise money, and connect with others.
- Encourage empathy by allowing the safe and respectful discussion of feelings (never forcing participation).
- Become language sensitive and teach children to be alert to hurtful language.
- Treat parents as partners: informed and involved in your efforts.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The content of the actual pre-made flipchart/overhead is a slightly condensed version of the above list. Use the information above to elaborate on these strategies.

Briefly discuss a few of the strategies above, using personal examples as appropriate.

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the information in the above two pre-made flipcharts/overheads is to ask participants the question, "What can we do in our classrooms to promote tolerance and respect for others?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

Transition to Taking Care of Yourself.

Children need our strength and calm, even when we are feeling fearful, uncertain and unsafe. We can't take care of our children if we don't take care of ourselves. Listed are some helpful strategies to help adults take care of themselves.

Show Overhead 10: Taking Care of Yourself

- Follow routines and rituals that nourish your needs and spirit.
- Live well: eat right, get exercise, sleep, and drink plenty of water.
- Minimize alcohol intake.
- Take breaks from the news and headlines.
- Talk about your feelings with other adults.
- Give yourself some slack for behavior under stress.
- Take time to do something fun.
- Don't let your child be your caretaker.
- Feel your feelings; observe yourself without judgment; cry.
- Avoid negative people who bring you down.

Briefly discuss a few of the ideas listed above. Add brief examples as appropriate.

FACILITATION OPTION

An alternative to presenting the above information is to ask participants the question, "What are some ways that you can take care of yourself?" and write down participant responses on a new sheet of flipchart paper. Comment upon participant responses as appropriate.

Helping Children Cope, continued

If you are using the *What Happened to the World?* book, direct participants to more strategies for "Taking Care of Yourself."

Transition to Open Forum

Tell participants that we have shared a lot of information about what we think are normal reactions in children, ways to deal with those reactions, ideas about tolerance, and strategies for taking care of yourself. Now it's time to open the discussion to hear any comments, questions, or stories that they would like to share.

Open Forum

Purpose

The purpose of this segment is to provide an open forum for participants to ask questions, share stories, and provide comments about how they and their children are coping during these turbulent times.

Time

25 to 55 minutes

Process

The facilitator will facilitate this discussion by using open-ended questions, silence technique, and open body language to encourage participation.

Materials Needed

- None

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Open Forum

FACILITATOR NOTE

As you facilitate the "Open Forum," pay attention to the way you ask questions of the group. While asking, "Do you have any questions?" may be met with silence, asking "What thoughts or questions do you have?" will generally elicit a greater response. The key here is to create a warm and safe environment for people to ask sensitive questions. Use open body language (arms relaxed and by your side, leaning slightly forward) and good eye contact to encourage participants to speak. It can also be helpful to use the silence technique: ask an open-ended question and wait a minimum of 10 seconds before asking another; typically somebody will respond within that timeframe.

Conduct the *What Happened to the World?* Open Forum.

Ask participants:

- What questions do you have?
- What stories would you like to share?

FACILITATOR NOTE

You do not need to respond to participant questions immediately. Take time and be thoughtful in your responses. You might want to redirect the question to the group or any supporting facilitators by asking, "Does anyone have any thoughts or suggestions about this situation that they'd like to offer?" If a question is out of your professional realm or expertise, acknowledge that and suggest that participants investigate the other resources and Web sites provided in the book or handouts.

Open Forum, continued

Ten minutes before the end of the forum, let participants know that there is time remaining for one more question.

FACILITATOR NOTE

Be prepared to mention a few of the Web sites in the book or handouts by viewing some of the sites prior to facilitating the session.

Transition to Closing

Tell participants that we have discussed some thought-provoking questions, and we will surely have many more. Raising our children is complicated in any time. If using the *What Happened to the World?* book, refer participants to more ideas about how to talk to your children about terrorism, tolerance, war, and other topics. There are also a number of Web sites listed by category for additional help. The handouts will also list some of the Web sites.

Closing

Purpose

The purpose of this segment is to review the objectives for the session and leave participants with the message that in times of crisis, children need our strength, our wisdom, and our reassurance. They need our best as human beings.

Time

5 minutes

Process

The facilitator will review the objectives of the session and convey a sense of hope to participants. The facilitator will once again refer participants to the *What Happened to the World?* book as a resource. Finally, the facilitator will reintroduce any supporting facilitators for any further questions and be available for comments from the participants.

Materials Needed

- *What Happened to the World?* book or handouts for each participant

Closing

Remind participants that we have talked about a lot of difficult and troubling things; however, we all have an incredible ability to influence others, especially our children. Fred Rogers (from *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*) said in times of crisis to look for the helpers, and help children find the courage and kindness in the situation. A little courage or kindness goes a long way, and every little contribution helps everyone.

Share a story of courage or kindness that has given you hope or strengthened your faith in humanity.

FACILITATION OPTION

Instead of providing your own story, you might ask participants to share a story of kindness that they have witnessed.

FACILITATOR NOTE

In your closing, use a confident, upbeat tone of voice and open body language to promote a sense of hope.

Reintroduce supporting facilitators and others in the room who can respond to additional questions.

Remind participants to consult the *What Happened to the World?* book or the handouts in the future.

Thank participants for their honesty and participation before closing the session.

Closing, continued

FACILITATOR NOTE

Be prepared and available to stay after the session to deal with questions/comments from participants.

Transition to Optional Post-Session Dialogue

Invite any participants who have questions or comments that have not yet been addressed to stay and talk with the facilitator, any supporting facilitators, and/or other participants after the close of the session.

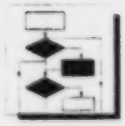
Optional Post-Session Dialogue

Purpose

The purpose of this segment is to give the facilitator and any supporting facilitators time to follow up with participants on any additional questions or comments they may have.

Time

15 to 30 minutes (not figured in session length)



Process

After bringing the session to a close, the facilitator will invite participants to stay and address any additional questions or comments to the facilitator, any supporting facilitators, and/or other participants.

Materials Needed

- None

Optional Post-Session Dialogue

Conduct the Post-Session Dialogue.

Invite any participants who have questions or comments that have not yet been addressed to stay and speak with the facilitator, any supporting facilitators, and/or other participants. This dialogue may last 15 to 30 minutes.

Thank individual participants for sharing their questions, insights, or concerns.

After the last participant leaves, clear away all materials and refreshments, and return the chairs and/or tables to their original arrangement. Adhere to any facilities requirements regarding lights, alarms, locked doors, etc.

Tips for Facilitating Discussions

Any open discussion has the possibility of being diminished by participant characteristics: the know-it-all, the over-participator, the needy, the rambler, or the antagonist. However, with the appropriate facilitator response, most situations will not become disturbing to other members of the session. It is the facilitator's responsibility to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable to contribute if they desire. Here are some tips to help you prepare to meet the challenges of handling a diverse group of participants.

Dialogues on topics like war, terrorism, the impact of horrific events on children, and the complicated issues of assigning responsibility and seeking justice often bring forth conflicting views. Participants may demonstrate a wide range of positions and emotions. Grief, anger, anxiety, and fear are natural human responses in times of crisis and how we think and feel about events depends on our values and politics. Some will be against military action and violence; others will be in favor of a strong military response. Some may feel that what others call prejudice or intolerance are reasonable opinions and feelings founded in experience and reason. There may be participants directly impacted by acts of terrorism or military service and participants directly subject to prejudice or harassment. It is the facilitator's responsibility to be as prepared as possible to handle the range of participant styles and emotions and to know when to change directions. It is also helpful to understand your own "hot buttons" first so that you can truly facilitate the discussion without letting issues or participants trigger an emotional response from you.

Following are descriptions of various participant styles:

The Over-Participator or Know-It-All

These people may dominate the discussion and/or try to give advice to other participants. These individuals comment too frequently and tend to dominate the discussion. They tend to comment first on each issue and can sometimes comment again after someone else has offered a comment. You don't want to discourage their enthusiasm or passion; however, you want to allow for others to be able to comment freely.

Use nonverbal signals, avoid direct eye contact, direct questions toward others, and move away from that person and toward someone else who has not contributed.

The Needy

These people have more concerns than can be accommodated in the time permitted. Their needs may be too extensive or complicated, or they may just seem in desperate need of more help.

While empathizing and addressing the concerns you can, you may need to gently remind the person that you have limited time to cover all of the material and allow for others to share their stories and questions.

The Rambler

These individuals have a need to be heard and are unaware that they repeat their points. They also have a tendency to digress from the main content points being discussed. They can be very passionate about their specific circumstance and can become emotional.

As with the needy, you many need to gently remind the rambler that you have limited time to cover all of the material and allow for others to share their stories and questions.

The Antagonist

These individuals tend to be argumentative or hostile throughout the session. It is important that their behavior or comments don't diminish others' willingness or opportunity to be heard. Also, some people can be viewed as hostile by the tone of their voice or body language, but may be very open to the content and to participating in the group.

It is important not to be brought down by the antagonist; use an open tone of voice and body language when commenting to the antagonist. Consider redirecting the comment or question to the larger group so that more people can be involved in keeping the discussion positive.

Following are some sample responses to various types of questions:

Some responses to the Over-Participator:

I appreciate your willingness to share such heartfelt opinions, but I think we need to move on. Who else has observed…?

I'm not sure we can address all your concerns in such a brief period, so why don't we talk after the session?

Some responses to the Know-It-All, who offers advice you feel is ill-advised:

Another course of action might be…

I'm not sure that I would recommend that course of action…

If the Know-It-All's advice is destructive, use stronger language:

I wouldn't recommend that course of action, but we all have to decide what response works for us. I would suggest…

A response to someone who breaks down emotionally:

Our hearts go out to you. You certainly aren't alone in being overwhelmed by emotion, and I really appreciate your sharing.

Use solid eye contact and move closer to the person so that he or she feels your concern and interest. Then ask the group for additional comments, or move on to someone else and take the attention off of the emotional person.

Someone asks for advice about his/her child:

What to say and do usually depends on the child. When a parent or teacher asks you "What would you say or do," you might want to find out more about the child and or respond, *what do you think*? You don't have to have the answers. You may want to preface an answer: *If it were my child, I'd probably…*

Someone asks a question for which you don't have an answer:

That's really outside my expertise. You might be able to find more information or get support from resources listed in the What Happened to the World? *book or the handouts.*

Someone makes a statement that appears to be intolerant:

When someone makes a challenging or offensive statement, it is a natural response to become defensive. Instead, demonstrate confidence in responding and facilitating the discussion by continuing to use good eye contact, relaxed tone of voice, and body language. If a comment makes you uncomfortable, it is important to appear relaxed before the group, as they are looking to you to manage the discussion.

While it is important that prejudice does not go unchallenged, be careful to couch any response in an understanding tone. Depending on the nature of the statement the participant's emotional intensity, you also may want to redirect the discussion away from issues related to the politics of diversity.

I understand that you have strong feelings. You may not have intended this, but it seemed to me that your statement stereotyped or scapegoated …

I don't think we can get into a discussion of these issues in the time we have. I appreciate your willingness to share your views honestly. Let's leave it that we all have strong feelings about what is intolerance and what is reasonable judgment based on experience.

Let's focus on what we want our children to learn and the behavior we want to encourage so that the world of their making will struggle less with ethnic and racial divisions. I think, for the most part, we would agree that we would like them to respect diversity, and to not scapegoat or stereotype others.

When you are concerned the session may be going in a direction that will get out of control or create emotional conflict you are unprepared to handle:

I'd like to pull back here, because I'm concerned that we may not have time (or I don't feel comfortable or equipped to facilitate this discussion) to give it the depth that it deserves. These are important and complicated issues, and we all feel strongly about them. Let's focus on how we can help children cope ....

A Question and Response Guide for Facilitators

"Time doesn't heal all wounds—what heals is proper attention to wounds."

Below are some of the questions and responses based on the questions from parents and teachers from New York City and other locations that have come up in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. These will be useful in preparing for questions that could come up in *What Happened to the World?* sessions.

Understanding What Happened to the World

Question: I have a 4-year-old boy. I have told him most of the truth regarding the events of September 11, but not that the act was intentional by a few "bad" men. Should I have told him?

Response: Children hear information from other kids and overhear adult conversations, or the television. We usually can't shelter them from the information. Therefore, be honest and give information in a way that is appropriate to his age. You might have said something like, "This wasn't an accident, and it was a purposeful crime."

As Fred Rogers said: "There are some people in this world who are very angry and haven't learned how to live with people they don't agree with." They come in all colors and live in different places. And sometimes they do terrible, awful things to hurt people. But there are many more people who know how to get along, and they are all over the world working hard to stop these people who do terrible things.

Question: How do you know what to say to a young child?

Response: Ask questions of your children to discover what they already know. They do not need to know everything at once; give them age-appropriate information. Children may be looking for reassurance that they are safe.

Question: When will life return to normal?

Response: Almost certainly, never. The country and its families will construct a *new normality* so that life can go on and we can rebuild. We live in a 24-hour instant news culture where dramatic images of horror or grief surround our children. The "new normal" for children will have to be a world where they come to terms with a new sense of threat and possible conflict, but nonetheless have the internal resources and support to live happy, productive lives.

Question: My 5-year-old's friend's father was lost in the Tower collapse. My son has only brought it up once. Should I force him to talk to me about it?

Response: Children will bring it up in their own time. Keep listening to him and giving him opportunities to express his feelings in art and play. Let him have his time. You might suggest using art to make something for his friend.

Question: I want my children to feel that the world is a good place and that people are good. How can I focus their attention on the good?

Response: Fred Rogers says when terrible things happen and children are worried and scared, help them find the helpers. Help them see all the strong, wonderful, people and community efforts all around the world that represent the best of individuals and communities.

Help them get involved in relief and tolerance efforts and get involved as a family – raising money, sending letters of support, helping Middle Eastern and Islamic people to feel accepted.

Emotional Reactions to Trauma

Question: What is the "normal" timeframe for people to have reactions like loss of appetite, interrupted sleep, crying, etc?

Response: There is no set time; it is based on your own mental health, emotional state, temperament, and other sources of stress. The crisis has changed the world forever, and America will never be the same again. Most people are a little off balance as we try to "normalize" from the events. Everyone needs time to adjust to the new normal. If symptoms persist after a few weeks, you may want to seek help.

Question: I have three children ages 4, 5 and 8. They have all had very different reactions. My 4-year-old boy loves planes and continues to play with them as much as possible with little reference to the attacks. My 8-year-old daughter made flags and posters to support the relief effort. However, my 5-year-old daughter has been very upset. She screamed, "I don't want to talk about it or see it. I had a bad dream, are you going to fly again? I want you to turn off the TV!" I didn't know how to respond, and I turned off the television.

Response: It was healthy for her to tell you what she needed, and that she has had enough of the TV. Every child is different; therefore, children will have different reactions to this as they would to other types of events. Over time, you may want to talk about why you will have to fly and why you feel that flying will be safe. Talk about all the thousands and thousands of planes that nothing happened to and all the new efforts to make sure that it won't happen again.

Question: I have a 15-year-old cousin who comes to visit us quite frequently. She can't seem to stop talking about terrorism. What should I do?

Response: Some children (and adults) will become almost obsessive about a huge tragedy or disaster. It is their way of processing the event. Listen and validate her feelings as much as you can. She might not need all the answers, but she needs to be listened to. As time goes on, try to help her move on.

Question: Is it normal for kids not to have a reaction?

Response: Yes, it is normal for kids of all ages to have reactions ranging from indifference to traumatic stress. For some it is too abstract and distant; for others it causes them to be numb. Some people are born empathetic and highly sensitive and will react far more strongly to personal and societal catastrophe.

Common Changes in Behavior

Question: My 3-year-old, who was potty trained, is now refusing to use the potty. Is this a normal reaction?

Response: Yes, 3-year-olds understand a lot more than they can communicate to us. A 3-year-old is trying to make sense of these events. She can sense that the adults around her are acting differently. She is demonstrating fear and insecurity, which is a normal reaction. Kids try to exert control over what they can control, consciously and unconsciously, and their options are limited.

Question: I have two preschool children who lost two aunts last year due to cancer. Their behaviors have regressed; they are clinging and screaming. They want to know whom they would go to if I died. What do I do to reassure them?

Response: Children who have experienced loss are more vulnerable. Spend time with them, hold them, talk to them, and read to them. Provide consistent routine and warm comforting rituals.

Question: Our teenage daughter has shut down. She doesn't want to discuss, see, or hear any more about it. Yet, she needs someone to sleep with her and is even afraid of taking a shower. Is this normal?

Response: The behaviors you describe in your teenage daughter are all a normal response to scary events. Many of us alternate between shutting down to all of the information related to catastrophe and opening back up. And every day, parts of our lives, like sleeping or taking a shower (both things done by yourself typically), can become times when we notice our fears even more. With teenagers in and out of crisis, it often helps just to be available; they will talk when they are ready.

Eventually she will start talking. Your presence alone will be comforting and communicate that you care. She will eventually start talking about what has happened on her own timetable

Children's Fears

Question: I have two children, a 6-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl. I was focusing on my 6-year-old and making sure that he understood what he was hearing at school and on the TV. I made sure that the family room TV was on the kid stations. He asked lots of "why" questions and then would move on. I didn't pay much attention to my 3-year-old as she had limited exposure to the events. A few days after the attack, she totally flipped out, screaming and kicking, pointing at a plane overhead and yelling "the plane, the plane." It took a few minutes for me to comfort her. What do I do?

Response: Continue to comfort and support her; this is normal behavior. Let her know you are both safe. Even 3-year-olds know and understand more than they are able to communicate. They know enough to worry and be frightened. Let her know that planes are safe and it isn't likely to happen again.

Question: My 12-year-old has always been pretty realistic and secure. He now says he will never feel safe again. What do I tell him?

Response: The truth is, he is still in touch with reality. To help him gain a sense of safety, keep his routines as stable as possible, let him know where you are, and let him make as many choices as appropriate. The book talks about how life won't return to normal, but we will all create "a new normality."

Question: A week after the attacks, my 8-year-old daughter began checking and re-checking that the doors to our home are locked. She does not want to be left alone. She does not like to see my husband or me leave the house. We have been talking to her and comforting her, hoping her fears will pass. Is this a typical reaction in an 8-year-old? Is there anything else we should be doing?

Response: The behaviors you describe in your 8-year-old daughter are normal given the extraordinary circumstances. Talking to her and comforting her are exactly the things to do. In addition, provide a little extra comfort, both physically and in the words you use with her. This is a time when the physical presence of a trusted adult helps greatly. Reassure her that what happened is very, very unusual and isn't normal, but don't discount her fears in any way. Don't be surprised if the incidents of this past week also stir up old fears in your daughter that you thought were long gone.

Question: How should we deal with post-September 11 hysteria, especially when our schools have received several bomb threats. How do we target their fears of feeling unsafe in school, as well as parent concerns for their kids in our schools?

Response: Reassurance. Tell the children that it is the job of the adults around them to protect them. Assure them that you, their families, their teachers and caregivers, and other adults around them care about them and will do everything possible to keep them safe.

Question: The children at school are all talking about getting poisoned: through the mail, in cereal boxes, or being sprayed from above. My son is asking how we know if the food we eat, the mail, or even the water we drink is safe.

Response: Helping our children feel safe begins with helping ourselves feel safe. And that begins with us being thoughtful, rational, and appropriately careful. Contrary to early stories, the threat of the use of chemical or biological terror on a wide scale is very small. It is extremely difficult. We are *feeling* much more insecure than we actually are. We are in a time where new threats have been thrust to the forefront of all of our consciousness. These may well be real, ongoing threats, but the likelihood of any one of them impacting any of our lives directly is very, very small – although it may not feel that way because it *might* happen to any of us. It is not unlike big lotteries. The odds of you winning are millions to one, but someone does win and it might be you. Yes, there are likely to be other terrorist attacks and some will get hurt, but the odds of it being you or me are astronomical, and our children need to know and *feel* that.

Remember, we go about our lives despite all the realistic threats in our daily life. Crossing the street, riding in automobiles, fire, drowning, and household accidents pose far more threat to our safety than the acts of terrorists (or other bad strangers). Those threats are not sensational: there are no headlines, breathless news stories, daily procession of experts making a living sensationalizing the threats, or sharing fears around the water cooler. We adjust to the way the world is. We are more or less aware of the risks and take the precautions we know about. That is what we are now doing with the threat of terrorism.

Understanding and Supporting Children

Question: I have two teenage girls and they have a lot of friends with whom they spend a lot of time. What concerns them is not knowing what the future holds. They want to know if they or their boyfriends will be drafted.

Response: The way the laws are currently written, it is unlikely that girls will be drafted. It is also probably unlikely that boys will be drafted, unless events take a huge and unlikely turn toward a major war. Teens are really asking about their

safety. Be as honest as you can about the uncertainty of the future and allow them to share their concerns. It is important to let teenagers share their concerns without giving any response; just listen.

Question: My children will be attending a memorial service we are planning. What would be appropriate for the children to do at the service?

Response: Begin by asking the children what they would like to do. By allowing them to brainstorm some ideas, it gives them some control over the situation. Some appropriate activities would be writing stories or drawing pictures of those they knew and using pictures or magazines to make collages.

Question: My 9-year-old boy keeps asking "Do you have to go to work today?" How should I respond?

Responses: "Yes, I have to go to work because if I don't, we won't eat! I will miss you, but I will be home at 6:00. What would you like for dinner? We could do something fun on Saturday; what would you like to do?" Let your child know that you need to continue on; however, give him as much detail as possible as to where you will be and when you can spend some time together. Let him know that you will be safe at work.

Question: My 13-year-old son had to write a report on the impact of September 11. At first he wrote that he was scared; then he wrote about how powerful we are so that "we can get them all." Have we taken away his childhood?

Response: Shocking events like those on September 11 or natural disasters do force children to face major life issues: life and death, good and evil, war and peace. But children can see the positive reactions and the reasons for optimism – people coming together, helping the victims and survivors, and practicing tolerance and respect for others.

Sometimes, parents are not the people a teenager wants to hear from. Continue to be honest with him and ask a lot of questions such as, "What makes you think that?" Listen to him and share your optimism with him.

Question: I work with preschoolers, and shortly after the attacks they kept telling each other and the staff that they were there. How do we respond to that, as we know they were not there?

Response: Preschoolers can believe that they were there because they saw it on TV – over and over again. Respond with open-ended questions or comments like, "You were there?" to encourage further dialogue. They do not believe that they are lying; to them it is real every time they see it on TV.

Question: How do we address the issue of children and gun play?

Response:

- Give children a little slack. It is still okay to say, *"We don't play with guns in the house or at the child care center. We don't hurt people here, even in play."* But we should understand that the desire, even the need to play at being the avenging hero, is developmentally appropriate. It may be wise to let them play hero and villain to work through their issues.
- Encourage hero play. Help children identify with the doctors, nurses, firefighters and police officers racing to the scene and getting to work: helping the wounded, putting out fires, cleaning up. For children, this means the moms and dads protecting their children, and the (imagined) children protecting their moms and dads from falling buildings and crashing planes. Provide appropriate props to help them do their "jobs." Redirect if the play leads to hurting themselves or others.
- Ask the child, *"What have you heard? What do you know?"*
- Listen, accept their feelings – the anger, fear and anxieties – and don't judge.
- Think before you respond.

Question: Our family bedtime ritual is to have a bedtime story and then to spend some time talking about our day. My children are now taking a lot longer to go to sleep at night and are having some bad dreams. What do you suggest that I do?

Response: Consider changing the order of the ritual. Spend some time discussing the events of the day and then read a story. That way their last thoughts will be of the story and not necessarily the day's worrisome events. Longer bedtime rituals are a good way to help children feel safe.

Question: I have a 9-year-old boy who wasn't saying much about the attacks. Now, in his play, he has begun crashing planes into towers. I asked him if he was okay and he said yes but that he thought it was a tragedy for kids because he can't watch cartoons anymore. I have since turned off the TV, but what should I have done?

Response: In hindsight, we all should have limited our children's exposure to the relentless images on TV – the younger the child, the more limitations. But children were bound to know about and see images of the event, and it is natural and healthy for them to express that knowledge in play and artwork.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Military Engagement, War, and Terrorism

Question: How do I handle questions about war and retaliation?

Response: When people commit crimes, they should be found and brought to justice. That is different than revenge or retaliation. A "war on terrorism" is a way of expressing our determination to find the people who are trying to hurt us and stop them. Help the child to understand that a few people are guilty, not a country or religion.

Question: How do I handle the question "Are we going to kill people?"

Response: Explain that you don't know what is going to happen. It is perfectly appropriate to tell children that we don't know the answer to a question. But assure them that you will keep them safe. People do die in military actions and wars, and we hope that any battles will only involve soldiers, not innocent people. Empathize with your child's concern that people might be killed, and avoid any comments that will create more concern or encourage a rush to vengeance.

Question: I am a member of the Military Reserve and may be called to duty. I have not discussed this with my children. What should I tell them?

Response: Be honest with your children; share information when you get it. If you don't know, tell them that. Children do not want to be sheltered from the truth, and they can usually tell when the adults around them are keeping information from them.

Children need honesty and reassurance appropriate for their developmental level. If mom or a big sister is in the military: "She has a job to do and is trained to do that job. We are all a little scared and will miss her a lot when she is gone – and she is really going to miss us too." It can help to involve the child in keeping the one she loves safe and connected. "We will pray (or hold her in our thoughts) every day and write postcards to her, draw pictures for her, keep a journal, and make a book of her letters. We can put markers on a map and trace her journeys."

Question: How do we answer older children's questions about war, military engagement, retaliation, and seeking justice?

Response: Keep it simple, "Sometimes whole countries, after much talking, still can't decide how to get along. They have armies that fight each other. Our army is very strong and works hard to make sure that we are all safe."

This is a very hard subject because adults don't always agree. For older children, help them understand that what happened is very, very unusual and isn't at all normal. There are many disagreements throughout the world, and people do fight and go to war over them as a last resort. Children will hear adults talking about

punishing terrorists and getting revenge, either as a tactic or a right. Using words like "revenge," "retaliation," or "vengeance," can contribute to a cycle of violence and should be avoided. "Seeking justice," communicates to children the intent to live in a just world. Probably the best we can do is to tell children in a manner appropriate for their developmental level that sometimes the only thing that most people think we can do to stop very bad people or governments is to use military power.

We can explain to children at their developmental level that we want them to learn how to live without violence and force, to use words, and to compromise. If all of us learned how to behave peacefully, no one would ever feel like fighting back. Discuss alternate solutions to war and conflict.

Question: My 10-year-old and his friends are very, very interested in the details of war and terrorism: the weapons, what happens to victims, and strategy. He almost hopes we go to war.

Response: This is very normal, including a fascination with all the gory details (witness the attraction of action movies and medical and police dramas). The suffering that violence brings is more abstract. Without being preachy, try to help them understand what really happens to people in military engagements.

Question: We live in Australia, but our kids are affected too. I did explain things to my 7-year-old son, and I think he understood as his grandparents often speak of World War II. He proceeded to tell my parents that if mummy and daddy go to war, he is going too with his friends because they could help shoot bullets. I don't like hearing him talk like this. Do I ignore it or try to talk some more about what we believe about human life?

Response: Your son's behavior is going to be common. Children, mostly boys, are attracted to war because it a way to be powerful and protect people they love, like you. But how you feel will have far more influence on who your child ultimately becomes than his friends or the current mood will. Continue to assert your feelings and beliefs about how people should resolve disputes. Children of pacifists often enjoy playing with weapons, but it is just play. Your son's play doesn't negate the sensitive, loving boy, any more than babyish behavior is a sign of weakness, or superhero play a sign of great strength. Play is play; it is how children work out the confusion and complexity of real life

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Tolerance: Respect for Others

Question: My sister-in-law is married to a Pakistani. I have held back my adolescent daughter from going to their house because I am afraid that she will ask too many intrusive questions or unintentionally say the wrong thing. Am I doing the right thing?

Response: Another approach may be to go to your sister-in-law's house, as they may need some support from family and friends at this time. Explain that your daughter is supportive, too, but doesn't always know how to express herself. Constraining your daughter's feelings and concerns by avoiding the topic will not help her deal with the situation.

Question: How can I maintain a level of tolerance among my 4-and 5-year-old students when I myself am experiencing a level of prejudice that I am not proud of?

Response: It sounds like you already recognize that it is important to recognize and explore your own biases – we all have them – and be careful not to pass those attitudes on to children. Find another adult who can listen to you about your feelings without judging you or giving advice. You may want to offer to listen to them as well. You need a place to "vent," so that when you are around children, you can communicate the perspective that people are good, but may do bad things sometimes for a variety of reasons.

Question: My children hear negative comments about Arabs and Muslims. They also hear "America is great" and people making fun of "foreigners" who aren't as good. I'm worried that they will develop prejudices.

Response: Our job is to help children of all ages learn to understand and respect differences and learn that we don't build ourselves up by knocking down others. Together, learn more about Arab peoples and Islam. Distinguish between the terrorists and all the other people in the Middle East and followers of Islam. Don't let negative comments go unchallenged. Help your child appreciate what is great about America *and* about other societies.

Question: My children see pictures on television of Middle Eastern people in Arab countries, and Pakistanis demonstrating against America and supporting Osama bin Laden, all in the name of Islam. How can they not assume that the Arab and Islamic world is against us?

Response: Unfortunately, the 24-hour news media sensationalizes, distorts, and simplifies issues. There are people who are profoundly opposed to America's policies in the Middle East and elsewhere. But your children won't see pictures of all the people who are not demonstrating. They won't see the vast majority of Arabs

and Muslims throughout the world who may disagree with some American policies but who don't hate America. The impression one gets distorts the reality that while many Middle Eastern people do object strongly to some American policies and practices, as do many Europeans and others, this does not make them supporters of terrorism. Explain to your children that TV likes to show the noisiest, the angriest, and the scariest crowds, not the peaceful people who are trying to go about their lives and make the world a better place.

Question: I don't think most Americans understand. The tolerance message sounds great, but it is too simple. I have lived in Israel. Arab children threw rocks at me. I saw the hatred in the faces of Arabs for Americans and Israelis in Israel, and now I see it on TV. I do want my children to fear Arabs and fundamental Islam. We all should.

or

Question: I don't think most Americans understand. The tolerance message sounds great, but it is too simple. I have lived in the Middle East. I saw Arab children in poverty and under military occupation in Palestine. ! do want my children to fight back for justice.

Response: You bring an important perspective. We all have to do what we think is best for our children so that they feel secure today and are not overwhelmed with fear. We have to teach our children what we think will help them become strong, thoughtful, secure adults. We may have to agree to disagree on the best way to do that. You have a very real concern that your children remain aware of the realities of political, ethnic, and racial conflict. Some of us will want out children to learn to *not* hate and fear others and to try to understand other cultures and peoples, particularly in times of conflict. Others will want their children to always be respectful of other human beings, even those they don't like or with whom they don't agree. Hopefully, all of our children will grow up in a more tolerant and respectful world.

Question: I get upset when people discuss the terrorists' grievances as if they justify the attacks, or when people criticize our efforts to wipe out terrorism. I want my children to be patriotic.

Response: One of the best and strongest aspects of American society is the commitment to divergent political views. In times of war, these views will range from a peace movement to total support for the military efforts. We don't all have the same definition of "patriotic behavior." What's important is that children grow up as informed citizens and understand that we can strongly disagree without resorting to verbal or physical violence. Take the time for your child to understand your point of view.

Question: I am an African-American Muslim. I have lived in the United States all my life. What do I tell my children when they hear on the news that Muslims are bad; that the USA is going to find and kill the Muslims? My children are afraid that we will be hurt or killed. What do I tell them? Why should I be afraid to worship in my Masjid or dress the way I'm supposed to as a Muslim woman?

Response: Hopefully other children will reach out to your children, and no one will give you or them reason to be afraid. Tell your children that they and the millions of Muslims in the United States and around the world believe in peace and deserve the respect and friendship of others. They should be very proud of who they are and what they believe. If you read the newspaper and watch the news with them, you will find many stories about why Muslims and Islam are not to blame, any more than Christians are to blame for the actions of Timothy McVeigh. If your children are taunted, tell them that sometimes when some people get scared and angry they say unfair and mean things. It is too bad that some people forget to think and be fair. But the President, other leaders, the newspapers, and almost all Americans don't believe in hate and hating Muslims or Middle Eastern people. They understand that a few people are responsible for the terror, not an entire religion.

Key Points at a Glance

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
5 minutes	Welcome and Introductions	The facilitator greets participants as they arrive. The facilitator then introduces him/herself and any supporting facilitators. Next, the facilitator establishes why we are here. Finally, the facilitator uses the pre-made flipcharts or overheads to show the session outline.	Introduction: ■ Name ■ Professional/personal experience ■ Educational background ■ Current work as it relates to topic ■ Establish personal connection Why we are here? ■ Share feelings, questions, insights ■ Discuss how to respond to children's reactions/questions ■ Share resources
25 minutes	Helping Children Cope	The facilitator will facilitate a discussion through brief presentations and dialogue strategies, utilizing pre-made flipcharts or overheads (optional) to clarify children's reactions to the crisis, typical behaviors, strategies for handling children's questions, tolerance, and taking care of yourself. The facilitator	Session Outline: ■ Normal reactions to a crisis ■ Strategies for helping children cope ■ Behaviors that are cause for concern ■ Promoting tolerance/respect ■ Taking care of yourself ■ Open forum for feelings, questions, and insights

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
		will point out children's behaviors that are cause for concern.	
		Common Emotional Reactions	■ Shock ■ Consuming interest ■ Fear ■ Sadness ■ Anger ■ Guilt ■ Helplessness ■ Anxiety/worry ■ Alienation and isolation
		Common Changes in Behavior	■ Increased or decreased appetite ■ Altered sleeping patterns ■ Fatigue ■ Confusion/indecision ■ Anxious behavior ■ Crying ■ Short temper ■ Headaches, minor ailments
		Children's Reactions by Age Group	Children Under 3: ■ Express reactions through language of behavior ■ Altered eating/sleeping patterns ■ Be contrary ■ Cling to a parent ■ Cry more than usual Preschool Children:

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
			■ Play out current events – heroes, villains, violence ■ Regress to younger behavior ■ Have nightmares, difficulty sleeping ■ Express fears (of planes, the dark, a parent leaving) ■ Become clingy, afraid of being alone ■ Get into power struggles ■ Want to help Elementary-School-Age Children: ■ Express curiosity ■ Become clingy and whiny ■ Show aggressive behavior ■ Show loss of interest/poor concentration in school ■ Develop headaches, minor ailments ■ Seem indifferent Junior High or High School Children: ■ Experience appetite and sleep disturbance ■ Show changed energy levels ■ Show indifference ■ Refuse to cooperate ■ Experience minor physical ailments ■ Withdraw, become isolated

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
			■ Worry about military service
		Strategies for Helping Children Cope	Helping Children Cope: ■ Be strong ■ Let children know they are safe ■ Be honest ■ Listen, listen, listen ■ Minimize TV, radio, etc. ■ Keep established routines ■ Allow for play time ■ Provide safe environment for acting out ■ Help children get involved Behaviors That Are Cause For Concern: ■ Serious, continuous changes in behavior not typical of child ■ Continued acting out or withdrawal ■ Nightmares every night Answering Children's Questions: ■ Be strong; offer reassurance ■ Think about how you come across ■ Ask children what they are feeling ■ Recognize clues in play, art, speech ■ Older children begin to understand

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
			■ Protect children's idealism ■ Be alert for racism and stereotyping
		Tolerance	Actively Promote Respect for Diversity: ■ Model appropriate behavior ■ Don't respond passively to prejudice ■ Discuss bias with older children ■ Help children learn about others ■ Reach out to Middle Easterners What Teachers Can Do: ■ Expand children's knowledge of world ■ Provide books on fear, conflict and respect for others ■ Create a democratic classroom ■ Create opportunities for cooperation ■ Help children find solutions to disagreements ■ Create projects based on the children's current interests ■ Encourage play and art ■ Research and celebrate differences in identity, culture, and beliefs What Teachers Can Do

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
			■ Notice unfairness in daily life ■ Find the hope in dark moments ■ Help children take action ■ Encourage empathy; allow safe and respectful discussion of feelings ■ Become language sensitive ■ Treat parents as partners: informed and involved in your efforts
		Taking Care of Yourself	■ Follow routines ■ Eat, sleep, get exercise, drink plenty of water ■ Minimize alcohol intake ■ Take breaks from news ■ Talk with other adults ■ Give yourself some slack ■ Do something fun ■ Don't let your child be your caretaker ■ Experience your feelings ■ Avoid negative people
25 to 55 minutes (can go longer if needed)	Open Forum	The facilitator will facilitate this discussion by using open-ended questions, silence technique, and open body language to encourage participation.	■ What questions do you have? ■ What stories would you like to share?

Time	Segment	Description	Key Points
5 minutes	Closing	The facilitator will review the objectives of the session and convey a sense of hope to participants. The facilitator will once again refer participants to the *What Happened to the World?* book as a resource. Finally, the facilitator will reintroduce any supporting facilitators for any further questions and be available for comments from the participants.	■ Share story of courage or kindness. ■ Convey a sense of hope. ■ Thank participants for their participation.
15 to 30 minutes (not figured in session length)	Optional Post-Session Dialogue	After bringing the session to a close, the facilitator will invite participants to stay and address any additional questions or comments to the facilitator, any supporting facilitators, and/or other participants.	■ Be available to address additional questions or concerns. ■ Reintroduce any supporting facilitators.

Overheads

Why Are We Here?

- To share feelings, questions, and insights to help children cope in turbulent times
- To discuss how to respond to children's reactions and questions
- To share resources for additional support

Session Outline

- "Normal" reactions in the aftermath of a crisis
- Strategies for dealing with children's reactions and questions
- Ways to determine when behaviors are cause for concern and may require additional support
- Promoting tolerance and respect for others
- Taking care of yourself
- Open forum for sharing feelings, questions, and insights

Common Emotional Reactions – Adults and Older Children

- Shock
- Consuming Interest
- Fear
- Sadness
- Anger
- Guilt
- Helplessness
- Anxiety/worry
- Alienation and isolation

Common Changes in Behavior – Adults and Older Children

- Increased or decreased appetite
- Altered sleeping patterns
- Fatigue
- Confusion/indecision
- Anxious behavior
- Crying
- Short temper
- Headaches and other minor ailments

Strategies for Helping Children Cope

- Let them know they are safe.
- Be honest and give age-appropriate, factual information.
- Listen, listen, listen.
- Minimize children's exposure to the media during news of violence and crisis.
- Strengthen and keep established routines and rituals.
- Encourage children to use play to make sense of their emotions.
- Provide children who "act out" with a safe environment.
- Help children get involved with relief efforts.

Answering Children's Questions

- Share your feelings, but be strong and calm.
- Think about what you say and how you say it.
- Ask children to define their words and feelings.
- Recognize the clues in a child's art, play, and/or conversations.
- Respect older children's ability to understand.
- Stay alert to racism and stereotyping, and work for cross-cultural understanding.
- Steer children toward helping actively.

Tolerance: Respect for Others

- Model appropriate behavior.
- Don't respond passively to prejudice.
- Discuss issues of bias with older children.
- Help children learn more about people of other cultures, countries, and religious faiths.
- Reach out to people of Middle Eastern heritage and Muslims.

What Teachers Can Do

- Create a democratic classroom.
- Create opportunities for cooperation.
- Help children construct their own solutions to disagreements.
- Expand the children's knowledge of the world.
- Provide books at the appropriate level on fear, conflict, and respect for others.
- Encourage play and art representing feelings and thoughts.
- Create projects based on the children's current interests and concerns.
- Research and celebrate differences in identity, culture, and beliefs.

What Teachers Can Do

- Notice unfairness and injustice in daily life and in the news.
- Find the hope and goodness in every dark moment.
- Help children take action, and take action with them.
- Encourage empathy by allowing the safe and respectful discussion of feelings.
- Be sensitive to language and teach children to be alert to hurtful language.
- Treat parents as partners: informed and involved in your efforts.

Taking Care of Yourself

- Follow routines and rituals that nourish your needs and spirits.
- Live well: eat right, get exercise, sleep, and drink plenty of water.
- Minimize alcohol intake.
- Take breaks from the news and headlines.
- Talk about your feelings with older adults.
- Give yourself some slack for behavior under stress.
- Take time to do something fun.
- Don't let your child be your caretaker.
- Feel your feelings; observe yourself without judgment; cry.
- Avoid negative people who bring you down.

Handouts

Children and Stress

Supporting children during times of uncertainty and stress begins with knowing the child. The best indicators of distress in children are changes in behavior not typical for the child. But remember, *not all behaviors or behavior changes stem from a crisis.* All the other aspects of life and development are marching on; adjusting to a new class or school, friends moving away or changing allegiances, parents worried about layoffs, or a teen not having a date all create personal stress that may eclipse societal turmoil.

Common Children's Reactions to Stress:

- Bed-wetting
- Fear of the dark, monsters, or animals
- Clinging
- Whining
- Nightmares
- Toileting accidents, constipation
- Loss or increase of appetite
- Fear of being left alone; fear of strangers
- Confusion/indecision
- Testing behavior or refusal to be cooperative
- Nail biting or thumb sucking
- Irritability
- Loss of interest and poor concentration in school
- Withdrawal from peers
- Regressive behavior (reverting to past behaviors)
- Headaches or other physical complaints
- Increase or decrease in energy level
- Indifference
- Depression

Helping Children Cope With Stress: A Quick Summary*

1. Be available.
2. Provide a peaceful household.
3. Listen, listen, and listen some more.
4. Be honest and answer their questions – at their level.
5. Respect differences in children – individual and age based.
6. Encourage consistency, everyday routines, and favorite rituals.
7. Make the environment safe for talking about feelings and thoughts.
8. Expect and allow for all kinds of emotion.
9. Give choices and be flexible – avoid power struggles.
10. Allow a lot of opportunities and different media for expression.
11. Encourage activity and play.
12. Support the child's friendships and social network.
13. Be a model as a human being.
14. Hug with permission.
15. Practice patience.
16. Support children – at their worst.
17. Expect behavior that is typical of a younger child.
18. Expect behavior that is beyond the child's years.
19. Live right – eat, rest, sleep.
20. Make bedtime special.
21. Resist overprotection.
22. Don't force talk and interaction.
23. Understand that playing is a way to grieve and sort through fears and confusion.
24. Attend to the physical symptoms.
25. Reassure the child that he or she is not alone.
26. Set limits on acceptable behavior, and enforce them.
27. Remember triggers that will cause distress.
28. Plan family time together.
29. Be available for help if needed.
30. Take care of yourself.

*This list was adapted from *35 Ways to Help a Grieving Child* (The Dougy Center).

Answering Children's Questions

Before talking to children:

- Get your own feelings and thoughts straight, and be your most thoughtful, calm self.
- Think not only about what you want to say, but also about how you want it to come across through your words, tone, and body language.
- Ask children what they think the words that they are using mean (e.g. *war, terrorism, Arab, Islam, army*) and what feelings they are having.
- Ask what's on the child's mind and follow his or her lead. Recognize the clues in a child's art, play, or conversations with friends.
- Acknowledge feelings. Share your feelings, but always be strong and offer the reassurances you can, even when you are feeling insecure.
- With younger children, try to control images that will define war or terrorism in the child's mind.
- Respect the growing ability of school-age children and teens to understand issues, and be honest with them.
- Stay tuned into the child and make the issues understandable to the child.
- Protect your child's idealism. Exposed to too much of life's dark side, children can lose their sense of optimism and feeling that life is manageable.
- Stay alert to racism and stereotyping, and work for cross-cultural understanding and respect for others.
- Be alert for opportunities to steer children toward helping actively, and exercise compassion.

Tolerance: Respect for Others

Children can learn prejudice at a very young age. They can learn to fear differences, stereotype others, and reject others because of identity. They learn this from the adults and children around them and from television, movies, music, and video games. Prejudice leads to scapegoating and discrimination.

Intolerance of others begins with ignorance and fear. Children need to be taught about humanity, human rights, and tolerance in order to combat images and stereotypes from the media and the world around them.

Watch what you say about others, and be a model for respect for diversity.

- Create a multicultural environment in your home or school, and show that you value diversity. Expose children to other cultures and people through books, media, and personal experiences with friends, coworkers, restaurants, festivals, etc.
- Use accurate and fair images of cultures rather than stereotypes (e.g., many Arabs are doctors, scientists, and teachers, not Bedouins in the desert or peddlers in a bazaar as represented on TV).
- Listen to and answer children's questions about others with respect, and pay attention to accuracy.
- Banish teasing or rejection based on identity: gender, race, ethnicity, religion, size, or physical characteristics.
- Provide activities and discussion that center on positive identity and appreciating differences among people and cultures.
- Help children learn the difference between feeling proud of one's heritage and feeling superior to others.
- Teach children to recognize stereotypes and caricature.
- Teach children how to challenge bias about themselves and others.
- Take advantage of a child's understanding of fairness and justice.
- Let children know that unjust images can be challenged.
- Involve children in taking action to make their community a better and more fair place.

Adapted from *Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do* (Sparks, et.al., NAEYC: Washington, D.C.)

Helping Children in Child Care and School: Tips for Teachers

My dad says not to play with those foreign children.

My mom says you have to learn to fight back.

I don't care what the other parents want, I don't want all the flag waving.

"Bang, bang, bang!"

"Steven, Jesse! What are you doing?"

"Shooting the hijacker and saving the plane!"

What do you say? *"Use your words? Don't play with guns; we don't play with guns in the center."*

Teachers are faced with a lot of difficult issues in times like these. Life in a group setting inherently results in accepting or reconciling different viewpoints. We all bring not only our own personalities and emotions into the classroom, but our own politics and world viewpoints as well. Crises can bring out the best and worst in each of us. The worst: simplistic answers, avoiding issues, bias, or proceeding as if nothing has changed. The best: thoughtfulness, caring, kindness, courage, and the opportunity to truly guide children to important learning. Children learn what people and societies are really about in times of crisis. In times of crisis, teachers need to role model and teach in their classrooms:

Thoughtfulness: What we think and do and what others across the world think and do is based in knowledge and beliefs we need to make an effort to understand.

Caring: There may be children, parents, or teachers who are singled out for their difference, particularly Middle Eastern or Islamic children.

Kindness: Human beings here and around the world are hurting, and we can all take action and help in some way.

Courage: The courage to accept differences and different views, the courage to help others in their confusion, fear, loss, or grief while we tend to our own.

Learning: Learning more about the wider world of people and culture, and the close-up world we inhabit – ourselves and those around us.

What Teachers Can Do

- Expand the children's knowledge of the world: books, pictures, music, films, food, art, field trips, and in-classroom visitors.
- Books: Provide books at the appropriate level that address issues of respect for others, conflict, and overcoming fear and adversity.
- Sustain or create a democratic classroom with participatory decision-making: Make the room safe for discussion of conflicting ideas.
- Create opportunities for cooperation: projects, chores, decision-making.
- Help children construct their own solutions to disagreements.
- Develop emergent curriculum: Create projects based on the children's current interests and concerns.
- Use conflict to learn: Take advantage of disagreements far away and in the room to learn about conflict resolution, acceptance, and self-control.
- Provide materials that encourage children's play and expression representing their feelings and thoughts. Children need to work through issues; allow fantasy play or art as long as it does not hurt others.
- Celebrate differences: Go beyond acceptance and tolerance. Research and celebrate differences in identity, culture, and beliefs.
- Notice unfairness and injustice in daily life and in the news.
- Find the hope and goodness in every dark moment: the caring, helping, courage, tolerance, and compassion.
- Help children take action, and take action with them: Write letters, send pictures, raise money, and connect with others.
- Take humanitarian action: International and national relief efforts always need support.
- Encourage empathy by allowing the safe and respectful discussion of feelings of hurt, fear, loss, and doubt (never forcing participation).
- Become language sensitive and teach children to be alert to hurtful language.
- Value and respect individual children, and try to eliminate stressful situations when necessary (new transitions, unnecessary challenges).
- Treat parents as partners. Keep them informed and involve them in your efforts.

Selected Resources

For an updated list of resources and more information on helping children cope with tragedy, visit www.brighthorizons.com.

On Children and Stress

www.pysch.org - American Psychiatric Association sections on coping with trauma/violence.

http://www.prepareerespondrecover.com/childrensneeds/ - Information on recognizing stress in children.

www.childtrauma.org - Tips for teachers and schools to help children cope with tragic events.

Listening to Children: Healing Children's Fears, Patty Wipfler. Parents Leadership Institute, 1990.

On Grief and Loss

www.dougy.org - The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children and Families is a resource with materials to help children and families with grief and loss. Toll-free 886-775-5683.

Parenting Through Crisis: Helping Kids in Times of Loss, Grief and Change, Barbara Coloroso. NY: Harper Resource, 2000.

On International Issues and Relief

www.mercycorps.org - International relief and development organization - information and links.

On War and Terrorism

www.esrnational.org - Educators for Social Responsibility makes teaching social responsibility a core practice in education.

www.talkingwithkids.org - Talking With Kids About Tough Issues, a national initiative to encourage parents to talk with their children about tough issues.

www.naeyc.org - Helping Children Cope with Disaster, from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

www.helping.org - Resources online for making a difference; designed to help people volunteer and find opportunities to give in their own communities and beyond.

Children and Trauma: A Parent Guide to Helping Children Heal, Cynthia Monahon. Lexington Books, 1995.

On Tolerance: Respect for Diversity

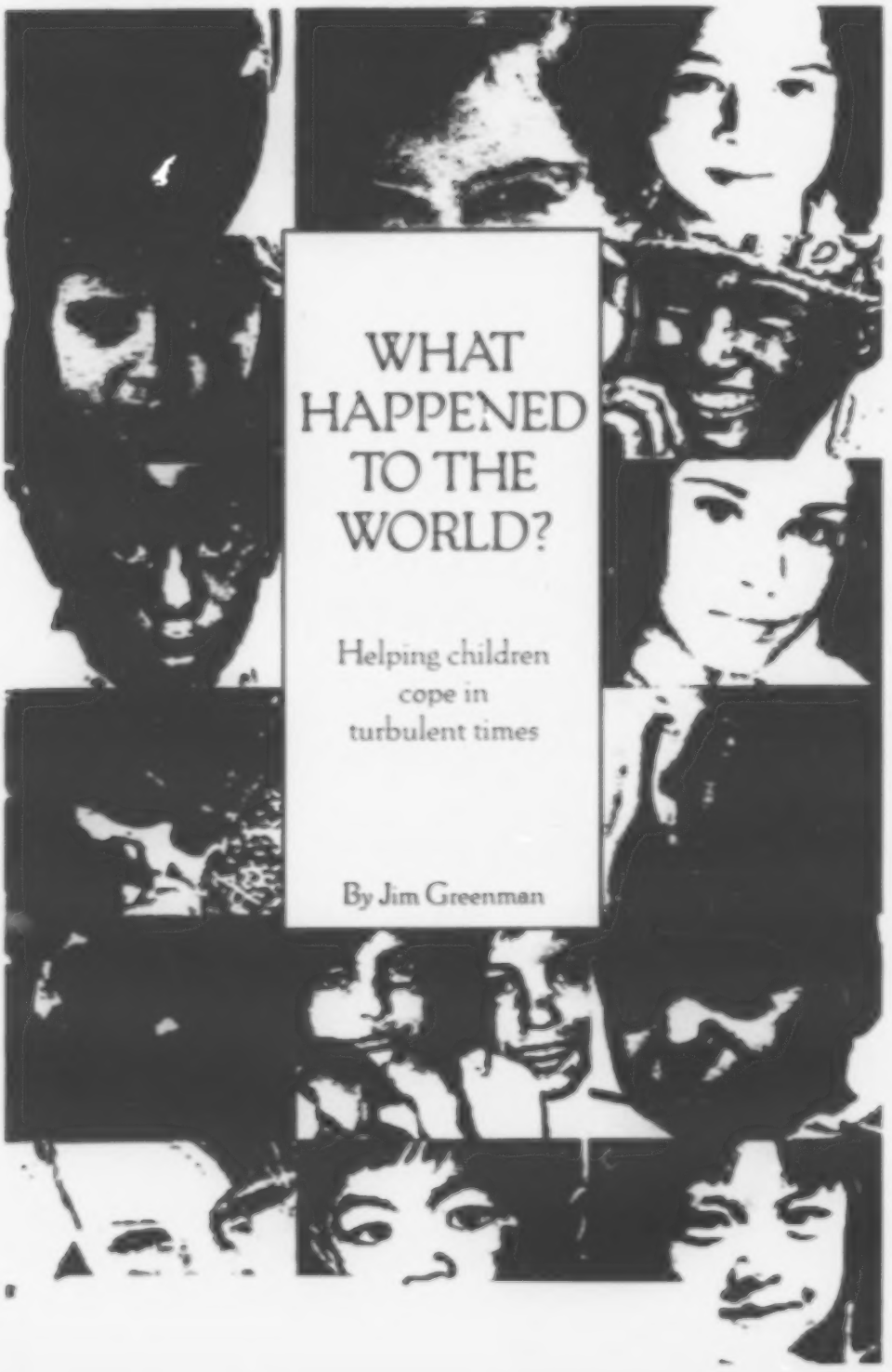
www.adl.org - The Anti-Defamation League campaign, A World of Difference, works to combat prejudice, promote democratic ideals, and strengthen pluralism. Materials for all ages. Write to the Anti-Defamation League at 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

www.tolerance.org - Tolerance.org is a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center that promotes tolerance and diversity and combats hate and discrimination.

www.adc.org - American Arab Anti-Discrimination Organization; information about Arab culture and society and crisis resources for all parents and teachers.

www.peacecorps.gov/kids - Peace Corps Children's site; a good resource for information about cultures around the world and how to make a difference.

Anti Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children, Louise Derman Sparks. Washington, DC. NAEYC, 1991.



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD?

Helping children cope in turbulent times

By Jim Greenman

Dear Parents, Educators and Friends:

All of us have been shaken by the extraordinary events of September 11 and the national tragedy that has befallen us. No one is immune from the shock and stresses this kind of catastrophic event can cause. And young children, who are in the most vital stages of development, are especially vulnerable to the long-term impacts of feelings of shock, anger, confusion and sadness.

As parents, educators, employers and caregivers, we all want to provide the children around us with the support, reassurance and understanding they need to restore their sense of security and calm. But we know this can be an especially difficult task at a time when we share so many of their fears.

That is why our organizations, as child care providers, employers, relief workers and grief counselors, have come together to produce *What Happened to the World?* This booklet offers guidance on how you can help children cope in these turbulent times. It also provides advice and additional resources to help children manage grief, fear and intolerance.

Together we have an obligation to raise and educate a generation of healthy, vibrant, and tolerant children. It is they who will ultimately provide the answer to the question "What will happen to our world?"

Sincerely,

Linda Mason, Chairman and Founder of Bright Horizons Family Solutions

Joy Bunson, Senior Vice President, Human Resources of JPMorgan Chase

Neal Keny-Guyer, Chief Executive Officer of Mercy Corps

Donna Schuurman, Executive Director of The Dougy Center

BEST COPY AVAILABL

Author Jim Greenman is Senior Vice President of Education and Program Development for Bright Horizons Family Solutions.

Bright Horizons

Bright Horizons Family Solutions is the world's leading provider of child care, early education, and work/life solutions, caring for more than 40,000 children in more than 370 child care and early education centers around the world. We dedicate this book to the thousands of children who lost a parent in the attacks of September 11, to those young children whose own lives were senselessly lost, and to the thousands of families mourning the loss of loved ones. We also pay tribute to the heroes among us, including the Bright Horizons faculty who administered aid to victims in lower Manhattan in the wake of the attacks.

JPMorgan Chase had 15,000 employees working out of our downtown New York City offices on the morning of September 11. We dedicate this book to the two colleagues whose lives were lost that day, to our staff who lost friends and family members, and to all the families affected by September's tragic events. Worldwide, 100,000 colleagues in more than 50 countries embody the spirit of the JPMorgan Chase values and work every day to bring their very best to our clients and to our communities.

Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps exists to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities. Mercy Corps has provided over $575 million in aid to 73 nations since 1979. The agency currently reaches 5 million people in more than 25 countries. Over 95 percent of the Mercy Corps resources are allocated to programs that help those in need.

The Dougy Center

The National Center for Grieving Children & Families

The mission of The Dougy Center for Grieving Children is to provide to families in Portland and the surrounding region loving support in a safe place where children, teens and their families grieving a death can share their experience as they move through their healing process. Through our National Center for Grieving Children & Families, we also provide support and training locally, nationally and internationally to individuals and organizations seeking to assist children and teens with grief.

What Happened to the World?

Helping children cope in turbulent times

By Jim Greenman

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 4

When the Towers Fell – "I Am Anyone" 5

Introduction 6

What Happened to the World? 9

Children Need Our Strength: How Do We Feel? 11

- Common Emotional Reactions to Trauma 15
- Common Changes in Behavior 16
- Taking Care of Yourself 17

Understanding and Supporting Children 18

- Every Child Is Different 20
  - Knowing the Child 21
- Children Under 3 Years Old 21
  - What Do Children Under Age 3 Need? 22
- Preschool Children 22
  - Common Preschool Reactions to Stress 24
  - What Do Children Under Age 5 Need? 25
- Elementary-School-Age Children 26
  - Common School-Age Reactions to Stress 27
  - What Do School-Age Children Need? 28
- Junior High and High School Children 29
  - Common Teenage Reactions to Stress 30
  - What Do Teenagers Need? 30

Changes To Help Children Cope With Stress: A Quick Summary 32
When to Seek Help 34
Helping Children Understand 35
Answering Children's Questions 35
Children's Fears 40
Children's Understanding of the World 42
Questions About Military Engagement, War, and Terrorism 42
How Do We Answer Younger Children's Questions About Terrorism? 44
How Do We Answer Older Children's Questions About Terrorism? 44
How Do We Answer Younger Children's Questions About War? 46
How Do We Answer Older Children's Questions About War, Military Engagement, Retaliation, and Seeking Justice? 46
Boys and War 48
What Do We Tell Children Whose Loved Ones Face Military Service? 48
What Do We Tell Teens Concerned About Military Service? 49
Children's Exposure to Death 49
Tolerance: Respect for Others 50
Teaching Resistance to Bias 53
Helping Children in Child Care and School: Tips for Teachers 54
What Teachers Can Do 56
What Happens Now? Toward a Better World 58
Resources 59

Acknowledgements

Grateful appreciation to the following,
who contributed in the development of
What Happened to the World?

Donation of services:

Liquid Fire Advertising
Child Care Information Exchange
Grey Ink
Pictorial Offset
The Creative Photography Studio
Steve Sack

Advice and Assistance:

James Boehnlein
Susan Brenner
Mary Bresadola
Sarah Buckley
Joy Bunson
Diana Crespo
Cynthia Doyle
Debbie Dreier
Sheila Eggert
John Fazio, Ph.D.
Jessica Fein
Sarah Fort
Christine Fossaceca
Mara Galaty
Dee Dee Guzman
Alison Hart
Ilene Hoffer
Najia Hyder
Griffen Jack
Doris Jewett
Kendall Johnson
Mark Koltko-Rivera
Joi Lecznar
Linda Mason
Keith Regehr
Diane Rollo
Ruthanne Russell
Kathleen Schmid Koltko-Rivera
Donna Schuurman
Kathy South
Maggie Stanley
Judy Uhron
Bruce Wachtler
Jim White
Linda Whitehead

BEST COPY AV

When the Towers Fell
"I Am Anyone"

Jim Greenman

I am 3 years old or 30 years old and I want to be with you
to cling, to be held, to keep you in sight, to connect with
everyone I care about. I am scared for me, scared for you.
I am 4 or 40 and I want to make sense of the senseless.
I build my block tower and knock it down, hard. I can't stop
staring at the flickering images.
The planes crash over and over and over. I am searching
for understanding about why this happened,
about what this means for me.
I am 5 or 50 and you and I are alike, but different.
I can't stop talking or I can't find the words. I make dark
jokes or I make angry threats.
I can't show my caring or I can't stop the tears.
I am 6 or 60 and I am mad. How could they do this!
I want to get even. We will get them!
I am 7 or 70 and I see heroes. I see firefighters
and police and people like me helping people. I want
to help. Can I be a hero?
I feel powerless. I want to be safe. I want to
protect those whom I love.
I feel confused. Why is the sky falling?
How could people do this? I want to know.
I feel angry – I hate who did this. Am I like them?
I feel so, so sad – I feel like crying.
My heart breaks because of the sadness around me.
I am 2 or 20, 8 or 80, 9 or 90 and I want us to be like before.

AILABLE

Introduction

Children's lives have always been marked by change. Each day brings new revelations that life is filled with storms as well as sunshine. No child ultimately escapes from the experience of fear, loss, grief, and trauma. But extraordinary events that shatter the sense of security of everyone they know and love put a particular pressure on the adults in their lives to be at their best as parents and caregivers.

The attacks of terror on a beautiful day in September 2001, and the revelations that more attacks were planned and may be expected in the future, have created a new national reality. The aftermath of a declaration of war on terror, as well as the certain increase in bomb threats, false alarms, and rumors, guarantee that life will be different for children and families for the foreseeable future.

The September 11 attacks were the act of terrorists who hated the politics of the United States. America was attacked by a terrorist organization, not a country and not an Islamic or Muslim movement. Times of conflict and war usually reduce human relationships to "us vs. them" and challenge our capacity for tolerance and understanding. We owe it to our children to resist intolerance and prejudice and to help them grow up understanding our common humanity and respecting our differences.

What Happened to the World? is for parents, teachers, and everyone working with children and families who is trying to make sense of a world where

BEST CO

91

the sky can fall, thousands die, war is proclaimed, and our sense of safety and security disappears in a day. It is designed to help adults peer into the minds of children and understand their fears, their grief, and their struggles to understand why the ground under their feet can suddenly shake.

While *What Happened to the World?* is a response to the events of September 2001, almost all of the insight into children's thinking and behavior and what they need from the adult world applies to other calamities, personal and social; death; natural disaster; and violence. Every day, individual children touched by life's darker side are asking: "What happened to my world?"

PY AVAILABLE

What Happened to the World?

On September 11, 2001, three blocks from the World Trade Center, a little girl left her child care center with her teacher to reunite with her mother. Stepping out onto the sidewalk, as her eyes, ears, and nose took in the gray air and ankle-deep debris, the amazed child exclaimed for all of us, "What happened to the world?" The teacher could offer no answer other than "You're safe with us. Let's go find your Mom." And that is just what they did.

What are we to answer?

Planes crashed, buildings tumbled, smoke thickened the air, and rubble covered the streets. Adults were scared, and on the airwaves and in the headlines there was talk of war. Anyone who felt removed from the threats of terror – who thought that mass destruction happened far away on the television or movie screen, that it wouldn't happen here, that Oklahoma City was an aberration – went to bed on September 11 shaken and changed.

The events of that day touched everyone. Certainly the millions in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania who experienced the blast and the aftermath know firsthand the trauma. Anyone who commutes to those cities, who travels by air, who works in a tall building or a federal building, who visits New York or Washington, or knows someone who does, is also affected. And, as the fear of further acts of terrorism grows, anyone who can say, "That could have been me or someone I love," is joined by many others who will worry, "That could be me or someone I love – next time."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The alleged hijackers were Middle Eastern men from a number of countries, bonded together by a hatred for the policies and practices of the United States and by unorthodox, radical beliefs not representative of the Middle East or of Muslims around the world. Their faces stare back at us from the front pages of our newspapers and from our television screens. We may look at them with fear and uncertainty – fear of our enemies; fear of foreign lands with political structures we don't understand; fear of cultures, races, or religions with which we may be unfamiliar; fear for our country. In this time of crisis in the United States, Arab-American communities, citizens from the Middle East, and Muslims in general who have nothing to do with the crisis are potential targets of intolerance, hatred, and violence simply because of what they look like, the sound of their names, or the ignorance of others.

When will life return to normal? Almost certainly, never. The country and its families will construct a new idea of normal so that life can go on and we can rebuild. We live in a 24-hour instant news culture where dramatic images of horror or grief surround our children. The "new normal" for children will have to be a world where they come to terms with a new sense of threat and possible conflict, but nonetheless have the internal resources and support to live happy, productive lives.

The child's world today is a global village, and children will have to understand what it means to live with others who look and sound different, have different cultures and values, and practice different religions. They live

here and in faraway lands. In the September 11 disaster, more than 5,000 people from 80 countries perished. News of all the events was instantly broadcast worldwide, and the search for friends and enemies is a global one. If our lives and the lives of our children are not to be shrouded in conflict, we will need to learn understanding, tolerance, and respect for others – a difficult task when the drumbeat of conflict creates a "*for us or against us*" mentality.

A climate of terrorism and war touches us all, but not equally. Some will experience much more pain and distress. In addition to those who have or will experience the events directly, there are many others already living with trauma or overwhelming stress who are vulnerable to new blows. There are also children and adults whose high sensitivity to tragedy and trauma leaves them particularly vulnerable in times when fear and tragedy are ever-present.

What happened to the world? It has become a place where we need to support each other and our children more than ever before.

Children Need Our Strength: How Do We Feel?

Adults largely set the emotional landscape for children. Children depend on us to be strong and solid, to know what is happening and to guide them through the shoals of troubled waters.

T COPY AVAILABLE

How did you feel watching the horror of September 11? How did you react to the growing realization that terror had come into all of our lives, that many of us would have or might be directly drawn into the experience of loss? Our hearts went out to victims and survivors and ached for the world that had changed. How are you feeling now in a world proclaimed to be at war with terrorism, and what might that mean today or tomorrow?

Knowing how you feel and finding your way to higher ground is critical to helping the children you love and care for. Even as babies, children see, hear, and feel our pain and despair, and they look to us for understanding, reassurance, and hope. They have a sixth sense that detects unease and uncertainty. When disaster strikes, every child wants to know from you:

Will I be okay?

Will you be okay?

Will everybody I care about be okay?

The first step in helping children cope with turbulent times is to sort through our own feelings and get the support we need. Children need from us all the love,

BEST COPY A

strength, reassurance, and calm we can muster. Their sense of safety stems from us: the big, strong adults who protect them from misfortunes they never imagined.

A distraught mother: *"I tried to keep talking with my children about what happened on September 11, and they just didn't seem to care – only that their TV shows were off. My husband is a pastor, and last night we organized a silent, candlelight walk down the main streets of our town. The thing my son was excited about was that HE got to carry the flag. This seemed important to him only because it was fun. I have four children between the ages of 6 and 15 years old. Even my most sensitive child seems not to care. What can I do to help them understand the magnitude of what has happened? I have tried so many different approaches, but nothing has worked. I don't expect them to sob like I have for the past few days...but at least SOMETHING should come out of this. I thought maybe they weren't talking because they were so scared...but they said they were not scared. I asked them what they thought. They decided that we should just annihilate the enemy. (Unfortunately, they got that idea from me.) I talked about the children who will be coming home to a missing parent. I showed them how we could help by donating blood or money. I asked them how they would feel if one day Dad just went off to work as usual and never came home again. I just can't get through to them. I know they are not putting on a happy act and that underneath they are very scared and sad. Please help me."*

AILABLE

> Teenager: *Mom is so wacked. My friends and I talk a lot about terrorism, and, of course, I'm scared. I don't want to fly to Grandma's this summer, but I'm not going to talk to her and Dad about how I feel — they'll either freak or preach. Who talks to their mom?*

The anguished parent's emotional reaction probably overwhelmed her children. Their reaction to the catastrophe and the distress at home was actually fairly normal.

Some experienced the attacks of terror themselves or through the life of someone they knew. But many more watched the television, thinking, "That could have been me or my friend or relative. We could be next. Why them and not us?"

We all feel and behave differently in response to trauma; the timing and intensity of our feelings and the behavior changes that follow vary from person to person. Some take it all in in a great rush and open wound of emotion; others compartmentalize or push feelings down and try to manage the response. The stress in each of our lives varies widely, as do the supports that we have to cushion and offset the large and small challenges to our well-being. But somewhere inside, we all feel frightened and vulnerable.

Common Emotional Reactions to Trauma

Shock: How could this happen?

Confusion: What does it all mean?

Fear or worry: What will happen next; where, when and to whom? Will it end?

Grief for someone I loved, or someone else like me or those whom I love.

Anger at the people who perpetrated the attacks, at the cruelty and unfairness of it all.

Guilt: Why them and not me? It's not like me to hate and want revenge.

Helplessness: I can't make my world like it was – a safe, manageable place.

Sadness: Lives lost, children orphaned, futures turned to dust and ash.

Isolation or alienation: I'm not sure if anyone understands my feelings.

Hopelessness: I'm not sure all this effort is worth it; what does it matter?

ST COPY AVAILABLE

Common Changes in Behavior

I don't know how many times I have been in tears. Or angry. I either want to hug my kids or get away from them. I just want to sleep. My husband is driving me crazy. He constantly watches the news, or just works, and pays little attention to us. He doesn't sleep much.

Many people respond to trauma with some of the following reactions and changes in behavior:

Appetite changes

Change in sleeping patterns

Anxiety

Tension

Headaches and low resistance to illness

Crying

Anger or short temper

Fatigue

Hyperactivity

Mood swings

Difficulty concentrating

Numbness or apathy

Depression

BEST COP

All of these reactions are normal, up to a point. You are not alone in these responses. But when the reaction is intense and prolonged, seeking help is important for you and the children for whom you care.

Taking Care of Yourself

To take care of children, you need to take care of yourself:

Talk about your feelings with adults with whom you feel secure.

Try to create a daily routine and rituals that support your current needs (routine is a morning cup of coffee; ritual is more personal – drinking the coffee from your favorite cup while sitting in a chair by the window).

Try to create a daily routine and rituals that support your family's current needs.

Live well: eat right, get exercise, sleep.

Cry when you need to, and seek solitude when you have to.

Take breaks from the news and headlines.

Take breaks from others who bring you down.

Give yourself and those around you some slack for poor behavior under stress.

Seek help if you feel that life is not becoming more manageable.

Replenish your spirit with friends, faith, family, music, or nature.

Y AVAILABLE

Understanding and Supporting Children

A week after the terror in New York, 4-year-old Kia asked her mom when the planes would stop crashing and the buildings stop falling. Her mother reassured her that it was all over. "No, Mom, it happened again last night, and this morning," said Kia. "Honey, it's over," her mother said with a hug. "No! Come look," Kia insisted, and her mother once again saw the familiar images appearing on the TV screen. "But that's the same plane and the same building. That happened last week," her mother explained. "Oh," said Kia, still convinced that hundreds of planes had attacked hundreds of buildings.

The planes keep crashing into the buildings. The buildings keep falling down. The people keep emerging covered with dust and blood, day after day. And, if you are a child watching the news, it doesn't stop. If you happen to be 3 or 4 or 5 years old, still learning to navigate the confusing borders of time and space and what is real and what isn't, you probably think it's dozens of planes and dozens of buildings. Daily crashes result in daily destruction, and the child may always be thinking, "When will it happen to me?"

12-year-old Jason, Manny, and their friends spent time together delightedly imagining all the ways the terrorist might strike again,

BEST COP

terrifying their younger siblings. They focused on the gory details. They also plotted grisly counter-terror initiatives. Manny's older brother talked enthusiastically of enlisting in the armed forces.

Die Hard, The Terminator, JAG, and other action dramas are now taking on new meaning for young adults, particularly boys. Their reactions to world events and approaching manhood will reflect the fascination with doing good (and evil) dramatically. It is normal for them to play the roles of warriors and police.

Y AVAILABLE

Every Child Is Different

Anne, at the age of 3, paid close attention to TV reports of any threat – crime, hurricanes, and earthquakes – and nightmares always followed. The loss of a pet, a friend moving away, and the sorrows of distant others were all felt intensely. Alejandro, on the other hand, breezed through his childhood with only a brief pause for the real calamities that occurred around him. Kim's vivid imagination and her empathy for others left her seriously vulnerable when any tragedy crossed her path. Malik and Tyler's 9-year-old response to airplane crashes were similar: while not appearing particularly upset, each needed precise answers on an infinite number of details about the crash. And 15-year-old Steven never let on that anything would shake his cool veneer.

Obviously, children are different, from adults and from each other. But remembering that in practice is not always easy for parents and teachers. Children think very differently from adults, and at each stage of development they view the world through their own unique lenses. From birth, children have their own sensitivity to change, to unexpected events, and to distress. They respond to dramatic events and stress in their own way and with differing intensity.

All children are vulnerable, but not equally. A child already grieving over a lost loved one (including a pet), divorce, or separation, may feel more vulnerable, as will children who have families in crisis, or who are under stress for any number of reasons. Unusually sensitive and empathetic children will also struggle more to come to terms with events.

BEST COPY AVAIL

Knowing the Child

Supporting children during times of uncertainty and stress begins with knowing your child. The best indicators of distress in children are changes in their behavior. Watch for behavior that is not typical for the child: a normally outgoing child behaving shyly or withdrawing; or a child becoming whiny, irritable, or anger-prone. A teen who is normally cool and distant may withdraw from the family even more. A child may regress to past behavior, thumb sucking or defiance, clinging, or not showing the self-help skills of which he or she is capable.

Remember, ***not all behaviors or behavior changes stem from a crisis.*** All the other aspects of life and development are marching on – adjusting to a new class or school, friends moving away or changing allegiances, parents worried about layoffs, or a teen not having a date – all create personal stress that may eclipse societal turmoil.

Children Under 3 Years Old

They know something is up.

Children under age 3 experience tragedy or disaster by absorbing the tension, fear, or hurt of the people they love and the changes in the household or child care program. Even very young babies react when parents are upset or depressed. Two-year-olds are beginning to understand the concept of hurt and may point out hurt people. They also may want to comfort you and others who are upset.

Infants and toddlers can only show their distress with the language of behavior: eating (and pooping), sleeping, being contrary, clinging to you, and crying.

What Do Children Under Age 3 Need?

Normal routines and favorite rituals

A peaceful household

Very limited exposure to the media and adult conversations about crisis, disaster, or military engagement

Ample time with calm, loving, reassuring adults

Preschool Children

They know more than you think, and much of it is incomplete or misconceived.

Preschool children are much more aware of world events than babies and more aware than we think, but their understanding is limited. Very young children are magical thinkers and do not live in our adult world. They confuse fantasy and reality, time and space, and are working through the concepts of cause and effect and permanence. Their daily world is already populated with monsters, disasters, nightmares, and heroes. The images on the news are not different from the fictional images they see on the television screen, so the major impact of the terror and its aftermath is the effect that it has on adults: new fears of bombs, anxiety about air travel, buildings falling down, and the threat of war. Children pay attention to adult words, and words such as **attack**, **revenge**, and **retaliation** may make them feel insecure.

BEST C

Preschool children have a conscious awareness that people can come and go, and in times of crisis are likely to have fears of abandonment. They feel helpless because they now understand that they need protection and care, and they worry, "Something might happen to those I love and need."

Children's sensitivity to tragic events as depicted on television varies widely. Some children barely notice or shake it off relatively quickly; some are very traumatized. Most children fall in between those poles. Preschool children may ask a lot of questions. They need honest answers, but do not need details that will disturb them. Do not bring up issues that don't appear to be on the child's mind, but do listen for hidden questions. Remember the old story about the 5-year-old who asked, "Where did I come from?" Following a short discussion of where babies come from, the child said, "Okay, but Tony came from Iowa. What about me?"

HI, DAD. GUESS WHAT—SHE SLEPT THROUGH THE NIGHT!
YEP. FIRST TIME SINCE WE LOST HER MOM.
SO TELL ME, DOES THAT COUNT AS A GLORIOUS VICTORY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GLOBAL TERRORISM?
DOES IT FEEL LIKE A VICTORY, SON?
MORNING, DADDY!
YEP. YEP. IT DOES.

By Steve Sack. Reprinted by permission of the Minneapolis Star Tribune

PY AVAILABLE

Play is how children make sense of and come to terms with a world that offers surprises and puzzles every day. Play is how children achieve mastery over the situations in which they are powerless. Their dramatic play may reflect the current events:

Building and destroying block towers

Flying and crashing planes

Playing police officers or soldiers

Playing doctors, rescue workers, and the injured or the dead

Preschool children also use art to work through and express thoughts and feelings.

They need adults who recognize that playing through life's horrors is normal, who listen to them, and who do not react harshly, preach, or condemn. Children need to play at being powerful, even evil. Unless play might lead to a child becoming hurt physically or emotionally, it is usually best not to intervene.

Common Preschool Reactions to Stress:

Bed-wetting

Fear of the dark, monsters, or animals

Clinging to parents and caregivers

Nightmares

Toileting accidents – loss of bladder or bowel control, constipation

Speech difficulties (e.g., a loss for words, stammering)

Loss or increase of appetite

BEST COPY

Cries or screams for help

Fear of being left alone; fear of strangers

Confusion

Testing behavior

These can all be normal preschool behaviors. The key is to look for changes in a particular child's behavior.

What Do Children Under Age 5 Need?

Normal routines and favorite rituals

A peaceful household

Limited exposure to the media and adult conversations about the crisis

Ample time with calm, loving, reassuring adults

Much verbal reassurance that you and they will be okay

Plenty of physical reassurance (e.g., hugs, snuggling)

To know where you and the others whom they love are at any given time

Opportunities for you to listen and gentle conversation

Opportunities to draw or use clay to express themselves

Opportunities for and acceptance of play that may reflect the current events with intervention only to avoid harm

Special time and reassurance at bedtime, including letting the child sleep with you

AVAILABLE

Elementary-School-Age Children

They know much more than you think and want to know more.

As children go through the school-age years, they increasingly inhabit the world outside the home. They can understand reality, what is real and what is permanent, but they lack perspective. They are learning how events fit together and want to understand how things happen and what impact events will have. They have a lot of questions and expect honest answers about details that matter to them. They understand loss and can identify with the people directly affected by events. They think about what life is like for others. Their fears are real and realistic from their limited perspective, and they often focus on the fact that "it" could happen to them.

It is a time when they are imagining their adult selves -- what they will do when they grow up -- and identify with adult roles. In times of crisis, dramatic heroes and villains both hold fascination for them. Increasingly, peers play a larger role in shaping thinking, feelings, and reactions to events.

School-age children are interested in rules and the difference between good and bad, right and wrong. Their sense of fairness and justice can lead to outrage and strong, rigid opinions in the face of terrible acts.

Common School-Age Reactions to Stress:

Nail biting or thumb sucking

Irritability

Whining

Clinging

Aggressive behavior at home or school

Competition with younger siblings for parental attention

Night terrors, nightmares, fear of the dark

Avoiding school

Loss of interest and poor concentration in school

Withdrawal from peers

Regressive behavior (reverting to past behaviors)

Headaches or other physical complaints

Depression

Fears about war, air travel, building collapse, surprise attacks

EST COPY AVAILABLE

What Do School-Age Children Need?

Normal routines and favorite rituals

A peaceful household

Ample opportunities for time with calm, loving, reassuring adults

Adults who will find out what is on their minds and answer their questions honestly with the details that matter to them

Verbal and physical reassurance that you and they will be okay

To know where the people they love are at any given time

Guided exposure to the news and adult discussion

Opportunities to talk and play with peers

Opportunities to play with adults

Opportunities to draw, use clay, or take part in dramatic expression

Acceptance of play and dramatic conversation that reflect the current events

Relaxed expectations at school or at home during the crisis period

Reassurance at bedtime, including letting the child sleep with you

Opportunities to help others and to participate in community efforts

Planning for safety measures to be taken in future disasters

Junior High and High School Children

They know much more than you think, and they want to know more, but not always from you, and they may or may not want to share.

As children develop through their teen years, their way of being in the world and responding to traumatic events slowly changes from the reactions of a child to the reactions of a young adult. Teens often feel overwhelmed by their emotions. They can experience a vast spectrum of ups and downs. Disasters or violent acts add to the mix. Peers are critically important, and the group reaction can heighten anxieties or leave a child feeling alone and out of step. Teens may respond to traumatic events with hyper-reactions or professed indifference, particularly toward adults. Some will be glued to the television and pore over newspapers and magazines; others will avoid the news. Some may have difficulty expressing caring, concern, and anxiety. Inside they may feel inadequate or guilty. Some may talk about gaining revenge or joining the military, while others may be outraged by hypocrisy and take a contrary view. Teens will track adult views closely, particularly around justice and prejudice. Teens, particularly older teens, may worry about what the future holds for them in a world where war is likely.

Disasters are difficult for teens because they occur at the time of life when they are often beginning to move away from family. The need to draw family together may cause resistance or conflict.

Common Teenage Reactions to Stress:

Appetite and sleep disturbances

Headaches, or other physical complaints

Increase or decrease in energy level

Indifference

Depression

Confusion/poor concentration

Poor performance in school

Rebellion in the home

Refusal to be cooperative

Aggressive behavior

School problems (e.g., attendance, fighting, withdrawal, loss of interest, attention-seeking behaviors)

Withdrawal and isolation

What Do Teenagers Need?

A peaceful household

To know that you are there for them when they need it (and want it)

To know your whereabouts (even if they don't admit it)

To be offered opportunities to talk about feelings – yours and theirs – honestly, but without being intrusive; listening, not lecturing

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Your best and wisest adult perspective on war, justice, tolerance, and other issues of the time

Opportunities to talk about feelings about the draft, military service, and war

Adults who are willing to engage in serious discussions

Time with peers for play and discussion

Adults who encourage resumption of social activities, athletics, clubs, etc.

Opportunities to help others

Group planning for safety measures to be taken in future disasters

Structured but un-demanding responsibilities

To take care of themselves: eat, sleep, exercise

Temporarily relaxed expectations of performance

Individual attention and consideration when they ask for it

Changes To Help Children Cope With Stress: A Quick Summary*

Be available.

Provide a peaceful household.

Listen, listen, and listen some more.

Be honest and answer their questions – at their level.

Respect differences in children – individual and age-based.

BEST C

Encourage consistency, everyday routines, and favorite rituals.

Make the environment safe for talking about feelings and thoughts.

Expect and allow for all kinds of emotion.

Give choices and be flexible – avoid power struggles.

Allow a lot of opportunities and different media for expression.

Encourage activity and play.

Support the child's friendships and social network.

Be a model as a human being.

Hug with permission.

Practice patience.

Support children – at their worst.

Expect behavior that is typical of a younger child.

Expect behavior that is beyond the child's years.

Live right – eat, rest, sleep.

Make bedtime special.

Resist overprotection.

Don't force talk and interaction.

Understand that playing is a way to grieve and sort through fears and confusion.

Attend to the physical symptoms.

Reassure the child that he or she is not alone.

OPY AVAILABLE

Set limits on behavior, and enforce them.

Remember triggers that will cause distress.

Plan family time together.

Be available for help if needed.

Take care of yourself.

*This list was adapted from *35 Ways to Help a Grieving Child* (The Dougy Center).

When to Seek Help

Reactions to traumatic events may appear immediately or after several days or weeks. Most of the time, the symptoms detailed above will begin to disappear as the child and family readjust. But if symptoms accumulate or persist over time, it may be wise to seek help outside the family circle. For one family this might mean turning to a pastor, a rabbi, or an imam for counseling; for another, a mental health worker. Your employer or the outpatient clinic of your local hospital can often help identify counseling resources. A counselor will talk to your children to help them understand their feelings.

BEST COPY A

"What Peace Means to Me"

By Luke Mays, Age: 8

No wars.
No terrorists!!!!!!!!
No terrorist camps!
No weapons!
No deadly machines.
More peace meetings!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Make more friends.
No more enemies!

Helping Children Understand

Until a crisis hits, most children (and adults) don't spend their days thinking about fundamental issues of life and death, war and peace, crime and punishment, or tolerance and bigotry. All of that changes with acts of terrorism or war. What do parents and teachers need to know now?

Answering Children's Questions

The aftermath of any disaster leaves us not only with physical destruction and difficult feelings, but with hard questions, as well. Children need the opportunity to talk about the feelings and issues that occupy the news – with each other and with adults. Children may ask questions that test our fundamental social and political views: "Why do people hate us?" "Why are those people so poor?" "Do you believe in war?" "What do you think of those Middle Eastern countries? "Is America always right?" They may ask

AILABLE

spiritual and moral questions: "Why do people die?" "Why do some people die and some live?" "Is it sometimes right to kill – even children?"

Children need our thoughtfulness and our honesty. No child will ever look back and say, "Gee, thanks for lying to me."

Before talking to children:

> **Get your own feelings and thoughts straight.**

Try to be your most thoughtful, calm, and emotionally stable self when you talk to children. Be prepared for the inevitable difficult questions about why people kill, why war happens, why people die, and why people hate.

> **Think not only about what you want to say, but also about how you want it to come across.**

Depending on our words, tone, and body language, we may project calm, thoughtfulness, sadness, anger, or vengeful self-righteousness. How do we want the child to think and feel about us as human beings?

> **Ask children what they think the words that they are using *(war, terrorism, Arab, Islam, army)* mean and what feelings they are having.**

Understand what they know and feel before beginning any dialogue.

> **Find opportunities to ask what's on the child's mind and**

BEST CO

follow his or her lead. Recognize the clues in a child's art, play, or conversations with friends.

Don't assume either a lack of interest or a strong interest without checking first. When you encourage a young child to draw or ask a child about his or her feelings, you give permission to think and feel scary or angry thoughts.

Acknowledge feelings: Share your feelings, but always be strong.

Children need adults to be strong in a crisis. You may be sad, scared, confused, or angry; and you can share your feelings, but be your strongest self. The child needs to draw on your strength.

Offer the reassurances you can.

From saying, "Lots and lots of strong, smart people are working hard to keep us safe," to reading a newspaper article on national efforts with an older child, or sharing hugs that say, "I'm here for you," help the child get the response that he or she needs.

With younger children, try to control images that will define war or terrorism in the child's mind.

The child hasn't seen much of life and can easily feel that everything, everyone, everywhere is coming apart; everyone is hurt or going to be hurt. The quantity and intensity of TV, radio, newspapers, and adult

Y AVAILABLE

conversation during a crisis can easily frighten children, and adults must try to manage those images. Very young children often do not understand that one incident generates a week of repeated images.

Respect the growing ability of school-age children and teens to understand issues, and be honest with them.

Many older children may for the first time become interested in larger issues of life in other countries, the military, war and peace, world religions, poverty, tolerance, and life and death. For all of us, these issues have replaced lurid scandals and local concerns in the headlines.

Stay tuned into the child.

Keep listening, asking, dialoguing, and reassuring as the child's thoughts and feelings evolve. Don't provide more information than the child needs to know.

Make the tragedy or conflict understandable to the child.

Every child is different, and the explanation of national and world events needs to match the child's developmental understanding.

Protect your child's idealism.

Children are idealists. For them, the world is a good place, people are mostly good, and life is worth living. Sudden exposure to violence and the possibility of destruction tests their idealism and ours. If children are

BEST COPY AVAIL

When the bilding's Crached I felt SaD!

BLE

exposed to too much of life's dark side and too much pessimism, they may lose their sense of optimism and feeling that life is manageable.

> **In every conversation, stay alert to racism and stereotyping and work for cross-cultural understanding and respect for others. Be at your best as a human being.**

In times of conflict, "us vs. them" mentalities, ethnic stereotypes, and contempt for "foreign behavior" lead to racism and cultural bias that is often unintentional, but damaging nonetheless. More than ever, it is time to recognize and appreciate cultural differences and teach children to accept and respect all ethnic groups and religions. Children need us to model tolerance, respect for diversity, and the need to learn about other peoples, cultures and countries.

> **Be alert for opportunities to steer children toward helping actively.**

The feelings of powerlessness and helplessness shared by both children and adults are alleviated through action. There are hundreds of ways to connect with others around the world and show our common humanity: pen pals, children's fund drives, cultural exchanges, and community work.

Children's Fears

As children grow up, they become interested in larger issues. But the basis of many questions and concerns that surface in times of crisis is fear.

BEST CO

Will I be okay? Will you be okay? Will everyone I know and love be okay?

To help the child:

> Identify the fear.
>
> Give simple answers, and follow the child's lead in continuing the dialogue.
>
> Always try to reassure. Help children feel that it is extremely unlikely this is going to happen to them, to you, or to others whom they know (even if you are not feeling entirely sure that is the case).
>
> Respect the fears. Remember that fear, theirs and ours, is not always rational.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, children (and adults) may fear air travel, the collapse of buildings, or riding on subways. They may worry about parents or older siblings having to go to war, and they may react to men who appear to be Middle Eastern or just "foreign." With young children, the best way to break down fear is through your strong, calm, thoughtful presence. Older children rely upon your strong presence and your rationality:

> People are working very hard to improve airport security, and only four planes out of tens of thousands were involved.
>
> There are millions of buildings in the country, and only three were attacked.
>
> The men who were responsible for this are not representative of the millions and millions of Muslim men or Middle Eastern

PY AVAILABLE

people. Many followers of Islam from countries around the world died in the attacks, too. Most Muslims are as sad, angry, and shocked as anyone else.

War against terrorism is very serious, and our country is very strong and powerful. Most other countries are on our side. Our leaders are working to keep us all safe.

Good people live everywhere in the world; they come in all colors and worship all religions and believe very strongly in world peace.

Children's Understanding of the World

All but the youngest children are aware that we live in a big world with many countries and many different kinds of people. The world beyond our borders becomes more real to us during international conflict. Interest in the crisis presents an opportunity to help children learn about the world and all of its people and to connect with them.

Use books and the media to explore the world's peoples and environments.

As children grow up, introduce different ethnic foods.

Learn more about the nationalities represented in your child's child care center or school.

Questions About Military Engagement, War, and Terrorism

War on terrorism does not fit neatly into traditional definitions of war. Children need to understand that war is when countries or peoples fight

over problems much harder to solve than the everyday problems among individuals.

Terrorism is when a few people do terrible things to hurt a group of people or a whole country and use scare tactics to get their way. The terrorists who attacked New York and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001 oppose nearly everything they think that the United States stands for. But almost all of the world believes that the terrorists committed a terrible crime, even those who disagree with the United States on many issues.

ST COPY AVAILABLE

Children are struggling with their own issues of how to resolve disputes peacefully. When they see adults using violence, it raises many questions. It contradicts everything we have taught them: "Use words," "Compromise," "Don't hit back," "Fighting doesn't solve anything," or "Thou shall not kill."

How Do We Answer Younger Children's Questions About Terrorism?

As Fred Rogers said: "There are some people in this world who are very angry and haven't learned how to live with people they don't agree with." They come in all colors and live in different places. And sometimes they do terrible, awful things to hurt people. But there are many more people who know how to get along, and they are all over the world working hard to stop these people who do terrible things.

How Do We Answer Older Children's Questions About Terrorism?

Older children need to understand that some very angry, very bad people who hate the United States and want to destroy our way of life have killed thousands of Americans and people from other countries as well. These people are a pretty small group of extremists from a number of countries but do not represent either the people or the governments of the countries from which they come.

Children and adults need to understand that to avoid holding innocent people responsible for these attacks, we must remember that terrorists

are individuals. Timothy McVeigh was a male, white, American, professed Christian, army veteran who bombed a building. All men, whites, Christians, Americans, and veterans, did not bomb the federal building and did not deserve our contempt; Timothy McVeigh did. We hold him responsible -- not others. Past terrorists have been women and men from many countries and all ideologies and faiths.

The 50 or 100 or even 1,000 people involved in planning these terrible attacks are reportedly Islamic men from a number of Middle Eastern countries. All Muslims and all Middle Eastern people did not attack America; a group of men who hate American policies and practices did. Many Muslims died in the terrorist attacks. There are millions of Muslims and Middle Eastern people who mourned American victims and donated blood. It is no more acceptable to lash out at Muslims or Middle Eastern people than it would have been to lash out at white, Christian Americans after the bombing in Oklahoma City. Our anger, fear, and sense of powerlessness can sometimes cause us to feel and want to do senseless things -- just like the terrorists did.

Older children can understand that terrorism is a political response and that the terrorists have specific issues with the United States' global presence. They may want to discuss issues they read about in newspapers or hear on the news. Even murderous attacks on civilians occur for reasons. Two sides (and more) emerge, and older children may want to question your views. They may want to know why America is hated or discuss

T COPY AVAILABLE

whether what we do is right or moral. Read the newspaper or watch the news together, and discuss the issues. When you don't know an answer, tell the child that you will find out the answer, or research the issue, together. With older children, respect the child's opinions, even when they are different from yours.

How Do We Answer Younger Children's Questions About War?

Keep it simple: "Sometimes whole countries, after much talking, still can't decide how to get along. They have armies that fight each other. Our army is very strong and works hard to make sure that we are all safe."

How Do We Answer Older Children's Questions About War, Military Engagement, Retaliation, and Seeking Justice?

This is a very hard subject, because adults don't always agree. For older children, help them understand that what happened is very, very unusual and isn't at all normal. There are many disagreements throughout the world, and people do fight and go to war over them, but it is almost always a last resort. Children will hear adults talking about punishing terrorists and getting revenge, either as a tactic or a right. Just saying words like "revenge," "retaliation," or "vengeance," can contribute to a cycle of violence and should be avoided. "Seeking justice" communicates to children the intent to live in a just world. Probably the best we can do

BEST CO

is to tell children in a manner appropriate for their developmental level that sometimes the only thing that most people think we can do to stop very bad people or governments is to use military power.

We can explain to children at their developmental level that we want them to learn how to live without violence and force, to use words, and to compromise. If all of us learned how to behave peacefully, no one would ever feel like fighting back. Discuss alternate solutions to war and conflict.

PY AVAILABLE

Boys and War

Studies show that boys are fascinated with implements of action and power, particularly weapons. It is important to accept that many boys will be fascinated and drawn to warlike behavior: both attacking and defending. For younger children, rather than quickly banishing or condemning war-like play, recognize that police cars, ambulances, rescue helicopters, planes, boats, cranes, and trucks are also equally dramatic implements of action and power that help and rescue. Of course, girls will also be drawn to dramatic action play.

For many older boys, more aggressive play and talk is likely, as well as an attraction to weapons and the people engaged in struggles. It is also likely that some children will be particularly fascinated with the terrorists in the same way Jesse James, Blackbeard, the Luftwaffe, and other villains or enemies have intrigued children. The best reaction is to avoid expressing shock and horror. Instead, explain why you find nothing romantic or positive about the terrorists, even in play. Make-believe violence is normal and can even be a healthy way of expressing emotion. But adults should encourage children to be a force for good in the world.

What Do We Tell Children Whose Loved Ones Face Military Service?

Again, children need honesty and reassurance appropriate for their developmental level. If mom or a big sister is in the military: "She has a job to do and is trained to do that job. We are all a little scared and will miss her a lot when she is gone – and she is really going to miss us too." It can

BEST C

help to involve the child in keeping the one she loves safe and connected. "We will pray (or hold her in our thoughts) every day and write postcards to her, draw pictures for her, keep a journal, and make a book of her letters. We can put markers on a map and trace her journeys."

What Do We Tell Teens Concerned About Military Service?

Older teens may be concerned about the draft, military service, the moral issues of war, and their own capacity for bravery and sacrifice. They need an opportunity to talk about it. What opinions or guidance you share will, of course, depend on your politics. What teenagers need most from adults on this issue (and almost any issue) is an open ear and acceptance of their feelings and ideas. They need guidance rather than preaching. We need to help them arrive at the positions and courses of action that represent their emerging adulthood.

Children's Exposure to Death

Terrorist attacks and the fact of war bring the reality and idea of death to the foreground of children's lives. To young children, death is another "magical" part of life. If someone who cares for them dies, they often feel abandoned. Because they believe the world revolves around them, they may feel it was something that they caused. Death is important to them because it is important to us; it upsets them because it upsets us. They don't understand the finality of death or the emotional weight of grieving.

OPY AVAILABLE

School-age children grow to understand that death is permanent. They are often fascinated with the cause and the details of the death. They understand death as a physical experience and often are concerned about the body. What happened to it? What will happen to it now? They can begin to identify with others who have lost someone they love. The knowledge that death is final leaves them wondering about their own death and the possible death of people they know. They may feel that death is a punishment for those who died or for their loved ones.

Children react to how the adults in their lives react to death and dying. The personal feelings and behaviors that they witness will create a climate of security or insecurity.

Children and families who are experiencing the death of a loved one under traumatic circumstances need to draw on relatives and friends for support. They should also take advantage of the resources provided by employers, community agencies, and the materials listed in the resources section at the end of this guide.

Tolerance: Respect for Others

Children can learn prejudice at a very young age. They can learn to fear differences, stereotype others, and reject others because of identity. They learn this from the adults and children around them and from television, movies, music, and video games. They develop stereotypes and negative

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

196

attitudes about groups of people and apply them to individuals. Prejudice leads to scapegoating and discrimination.

Intolerance of others begins with ignorance and fear. Education is crucial to our attempts to create a more tolerant world. Children need to be taught about humanity, human rights, and tolerance in order to combat images and stereotypes from the media and the world around them.

In this particular time of crisis in the United States, the most vulnerable populations are the Arab-American community, Muslims, and citizens of the Middle East. Middle Eastern stereotypes already abound in television, movies, cartoons, computer games, and comic books. Arabs are usually portrayed as villains who resort to violence. They are almost never portrayed as positive characters or heroes. Very little understanding of the rich and varied cultures of the Middle East or Islam and the commonalities and linked heritage of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism is demonstrated.

Children will express what they hear adults saying, giving us the opportunity to promote tolerance. If children express fear or antagonism toward people of Middle Eastern descent or Muslims, ask them to explain what they are thinking and feeling. At the child's developmental level, explain that although a few Middle Eastern men or Muslims hate American policies and did a terrible thing, many, many more think hurting others is terrible, and they do not hate America. There are millions and millions of children and parents in the United States and around the world who are Muslims or Arabs who are as sad, confused, angry, and as shocked as you.

BEST C

For older children, help them understand the differences between a political group with radical followers and whole peoples, countries, and religions. Explain that intolerance of others begins with ignorance and fear. This fear can be of other cultures, races, religions, or nations. We have every reason to be afraid of foreign terrorists (or domestic terrorists), but no reason to be afraid of Islam or Middle Eastern people. Together, explore information about the Middle East and Islam. You may also come to understand better the issues and strategies that drive the radical terrorists and may develop a new view of the problems as well as solutions for the conflict.

Tolerance begins at home, and school and education are crucial to our attempts to create a more tolerant world. Educators and families can prevent dehumanization, prejudice, and stereotyping.

Teaching Resistance to Bias

Watch what you say about others, and be a model for respect for diversity.

Create a multicultural environment in your home or school, and show that you value diversity. Expose children to other cultures and people through books, media, and personal experiences with friends, coworkers, restaurants, festivals, etc.

Use accurate and fair images of cultures rather than stereotypes (e.g., many Arabs are doctors, scientists, lawyers, teachers, and from all walks of life, not simply Bedouins on camels or peddlers in a bazaar as represented on TV).

Listen and answer children's questions about others with respect and pay attention to accuracy.

OPY AVAILABLE

Banish teasing or rejection based on identity: gender, race, ethnicity, religion, size, or physical characteristics.

Provide activities and discussions that center on positive identity and appreciating differences among people and cultures.

Help children learn the difference between feeling proud of one's heritage and feeling superior to others.

Teach children to recognize stereotypes and caricature.

Teach children how to challenge bias about themselves and others.

Take advantage of a child's understanding of fairness and justice.

Let children know that unjust images can be challenged.

Involve children in taking action to make their community a better and more fair place.

Ultimately, tolerance requires real relationships with real people. It is essential that we make an effort to bring children and families from different cultures together to truly come to know each other.

Adapted from ***Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do*** (Sparks, et.al., NAEYC: Washington, D.C.)

Helping Children in Child Care and School: Tips for Teachers

My dad says not to play with those foreign children.

My mom says you have to learn to fight back.

BEST COPY

I don't care what the other parents want, I don't want all the flag waving.

"Bang, bang, bang!"

"Steven, Jesse! What are you doing?"

"Shooting the hijacker and saving the plane!"

What do you say? "Use your words." "Don't play with guns, we don't play with guns in the center."

Teachers are faced with a lot of difficult issues in times like these. Life in a group setting inherently results in accepting or reconciling different viewpoints. We all bring not only our own personalities and emotions into the classroom, but our own politics and world viewpoints as well. The news may be filled with stories about people and events we have strong feelings about or know little about (or both).

Crises can bring out the best and worst in each of us. The worst: simplistic answers, avoiding issues, bias, or proceeding as if nothing has changed. The best: thoughtfulness, caring, kindness, courage, and the opportunity to truly guide children through important learning. Children learn what people and societies are really about in times of crisis. Teachers need to be role models and teach the following in their classrooms:

Thoughtfulness: What we think and do and what others across the world think and do is based in knowledge and beliefs we need to make an effort to understand.

AVAILABLE

Caring: There may be children, parents, or teachers who are singled out for their differences, particularly Middle Eastern or Islamic children.

Kindness: Human beings here and around the world are hurting, and we can all take action and help in some way.

Courage: The courage to accept differences and different views, the courage to help others in their confusion, fear, loss, or grief while we tend to our own.

Learning: Learning more about the wider world of people and culture, and the close-up world we inhabit.

What Teachers Can Do

Expand the children's knowledge of the world: books, pictures, music, films, food, art, field trips, and in-classroom visitors.

Provide books at the appropriate level that address issues of respect for others, conflict, and overcoming fear and adversity.

Sustain or create a democratic classroom with participatory decision-making. Make the room safe for discussion of conflicting ideas.

Create opportunities for cooperation: projects, chores, decision-making.

Help children construct their own solutions to disagreements.

Develop emergent curriculum: Create projects based on the children's current interests and concerns.

BEST COPY

Use conflict to learn: Take advantage of disagreements far away and in the room to learn about conflict resolution, acceptance, and self-control.

Provide materials that encourage children's play and expression representing their feelings and thoughts. Children need to work through issues; allow fantasy play or art as long as it does not hurt others.

Celebrate differences: Go beyond acceptance and tolerance. Research and celebrate differences in identity, culture, and beliefs.

Notice unfairness and injustice in daily life and the news.

Find the hope and goodness in every dark moment: the caring, helping, courage, tolerance, and compassion.

Help children take action, and take action with them: Write letters, send pictures, raise money, and connect with others.

Take humanitarian action: International and national relief efforts always need support.

Encourage empathy by allowing the safe and respectful discussion of feelings of hurt, fear, loss, and doubt (never forcing participation).

Become language-sensitive and teach children to be alert to hurtful language.

Value and respect individual children, and try to eliminate stressful situations when necessary (new transitions, unnecessary challenges).

Treat parents as partners. Keep them informed and involve them in your efforts.

AVAILABLE

142

What Happens Now? Toward a Better World

In times of crisis it is important to find strength and reassurance in our communities, our diversity, and our common commitment to learning how to develop a better world. Crises can bring into focus that we are one world, a world that our children will inherit. There is a pull toward oversimplifying issues and ideologies, friends and foes, and violence is a frequent means for expressing good and evil. Children need to be taught about the world and its diverse people, and to develop an empathy and thoughtfulness that underlies their judgment. They need to learn how to solve problems peacefully and to draw upon the strength of their family, community, nation, and the world.

Children are surrounded by heroes, in person and on the screen. In addition to the firefighters, the police, rescue workers, armed forces, and all those who helped the victims or survived the devastation, there are others:

> When parents and teachers give children their strength when they themselves are feeling shaken or overwhelmed with their own feelings of uncertainty, fear, or grief, they are heroes.
>
> When parents and teachers recognize their own anger and biases, when they resist the urge to scapegoat and hate and instead teach their children tolerance and respect for diversity, they are heroes.

When the sky is falling, when the noise is deafening and the darkness grows, children need all the shelter and light that we can bestow upon them.

BEST COP

Resources

For an updated list of resources and more information on helping children cope with crisis and stress, visit www.brighthorizons.com.

Web Sites on Children and Stress

www.kidshealth.org - Current information from KidsHealth on dealing with a terrorist tragedy.

www.pysch.org - The American Psychiatric Association has a section on trauma, violence, and practical things that people can do to deal with reactions to trauma.

www.siu.edu/departments/bushea/stress.html - Provides links to a variety of Web sites dealing with stress in adults and children.

www.preparerespondrecover.com/childrensneeds/ - Provides information about recognizing stress in children.

AVAILABLE

144

www.mctf.org/parents/tips/stress.html - Provides information about coping with family and child stress, with tips for reducing stress for everyone.

Books and Pamphlets

Helping Children Cope with Stress, by Avis Brenner. Lexington, MA: Heath & Co, 1984.

Listening to Children: Healing Children's Fears, by Patty Wipfler. Parents Leadership Institute, 1990.

Web Sites on Grief and Loss

www.dougy.org - The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children and Families is a resource to help children and families with grief and loss. Links and materials are available.

www.icisf.org - Resources for family recovery from terror, grief, and trauma.

Books

Resources from The Dougy Center P.O. Box 86852 Portland, Or 97286 Toll-free 886-775-5683 www.dougy.org

35 Ways to Help a Grieving Child

Helping Children Cope with Death

Helping Teens Cope with Death

Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers

BEST COPY AVA

What about the Kids? Understanding Their Needs in Funeral Planning Services

Parenting Through Crisis: Helping Kids in Times of Loss, Grief and Change, by Barbara Coloroso. NY: Harper Resource, 2000.

On International Issues and Relief

www.mercycorps.org - An international relief and development organization whose Web site provides information on programs all over the world and shows how to get help, give help, share grief, and help children cope.

www.redcross.org - International relief organization with comprehensive support resources; a site to get help and information, and make donations or learn about volunteering.

On War and Terrorism

Web sites

www.esrnational.org - The mission of Educators for Social Responsibility is to make teaching social responsibility a core practice in education so that young people develop the convictions and skills needed to shape a safe, sustainable, democratic, and just world.

www.aboutourkids.org. - From New York University Child Study Center, this web site offers advice in helping kids cope with the attack.

ABLE

www.familyeducation.com - Resources for the tragedy from the Learning Network Parent Channel.

www.talkingwithkids.org - A national initiative by Children Now and the Kaiser Family Foundation to encourage parents to talk with their children earlier and more often about tough issues.

www.nasponline.org - "Coping With a National Tragedy" from the National Association of School Psychologists.

www.naeyc.org - "Helping Children Cope with Disaster" from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

www.pbskids.org/rogers/parents/septll.html - Fred Rogers' thoughts on "Helping children deal with scary news."

www.scholastic.com - Advice for teachers and parents and a special news-zone for children from Scholastic Magazine.

www.zerotothree.org - Zero to Three is a project of the National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. The web site offers advice for parents and professionals.

www.helping.org - Resources online for making a difference; designed to help people volunteer and find opportunities to give in their own communities and beyond.

www.timeforkids.com - News and information for moving forward after the tragedy.

BEST COPY AV

147

www.childtrauma.org - Tips for teachers and schools to help children cope with tragic events.

Books

Children and Trauma: A Parent Guide to Helping Children Heal, by Cynthia Monahon. Lexington Books, 1995.

Teaching Young Children in Violent Times: Building a Peaceable Classroom, by Diane Levin. Cambridge: Educators for Social Responsibility.

Remote Control Childhood: Combating the Hazards of Media Culture, by Diane Levin. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Talking with Your Child About a Troubled World, by Lynne Dumas. NY: Fawcett, 1992.

On Tolerance: Respect for Diversity

Web sites

www.adl.org - The Anti-Defamation League is one of the nation's foremost civil rights/human relations agencies fighting anti-Semitism, prejudice, and bigotry. Its multi-media campaign A World of Difference works to combat prejudice, promote democratic ideals, and strengthen pluralism.

www.tolerance.org - This is a Web project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a national nonprofit civil rights organization that promotes tolerance and diversity and combats hate and discrimination through education, investigation, and litigation.

AILABLE

148

www.splcenter.org - Main page of "Teaching Tolerance" a national education project dedicated to helping teachers foster equity, respect, and understanding in the classroom and beyond.

www.adc.org - The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee offers educational information about Arab culture and society as well as crisis resources for all parents and teachers.

www.peacecorps.gov/kids - Children's site sponsored by the Peace Corps; a good resource for information about cultures around the world and how to make a difference.

www.wiesenthal.com - The Simon Wiesenthal Center is an international Jewish human rights organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust by fostering tolerance and understanding through community involvement, educational outreach, and social action. The Center confronts important contemporary issues including racism, anti-Semitism, terrorism, and genocide.

www.pta.org - "What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination" from the National PTA, a nonprofit association of parents, educators, and students, and other citizens active in their schools and communities.

Books and Pamphlets

Available from the Anti-Defamation League:
Anti-Defamation League 823 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017
www.adl.org

Early Childhood Resources, Miller Early Childhood Initiative of A World of Difference Institute Bias-Free Foundations.

Early Childhood Activities for Families, Miller Early Childhood Initiative of A World of Difference Institute Bias-Free Foundations.

Close the Book on Hate: 101 Ways to Combat Prejudice. NY: ADL and Barnes & Noble, 2000. (available from the ADL and Barnes & Noble).

What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination (pamphlet).

Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice, by Caryl Stern-LaRosa and Ellen Hofheimer Bettmann. NY: Scholastic, 2000.

Teaching Values Reaching Kids, by Linda Schwartz. Creative Teaching Press, 1997.

Caring and Capable Kids, by Linda Williams. Innerchoice Publishing, 1996.

Teaching Your Child to Resist Bias, brochure from NAEYC (available at 800-424-2460 or www.naeyc.org.)

Anti Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children, By Louise Derman Sparks. Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1991.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

© Copyright 2001 Jim Greenman
Permission to reprint this manuscript in its entirety for
noncommercial purposes is hereby granted.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD?

Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times

This book is for parents, teachers, and everyone working with children and families trying to make sense of a world where the sky can fall, thousands die, war is proclaimed, and our sense of safety and security disappears in a day.

It is designed to help adults peer into the minds of children and understand their fears, their grief, and their struggles to understand why the ground under their feet can suddenly shake.

A Facilitator's Guide for What Happened to the World? Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times is available to assist those who wish to hold meetings or trainings with parents, professionals, and volunteers who work with children and families.

The guide includes a comprehensive session outline, support materials, and handouts.

Bright Horizons [redacted] Mercy Corps

BEST COPY AVAILABLE